



THE MOVIES' MOST COLORFUL WESTERN STAR -

CHARLES STARRETT *as*

*The*  
**DURANGO  
KID**

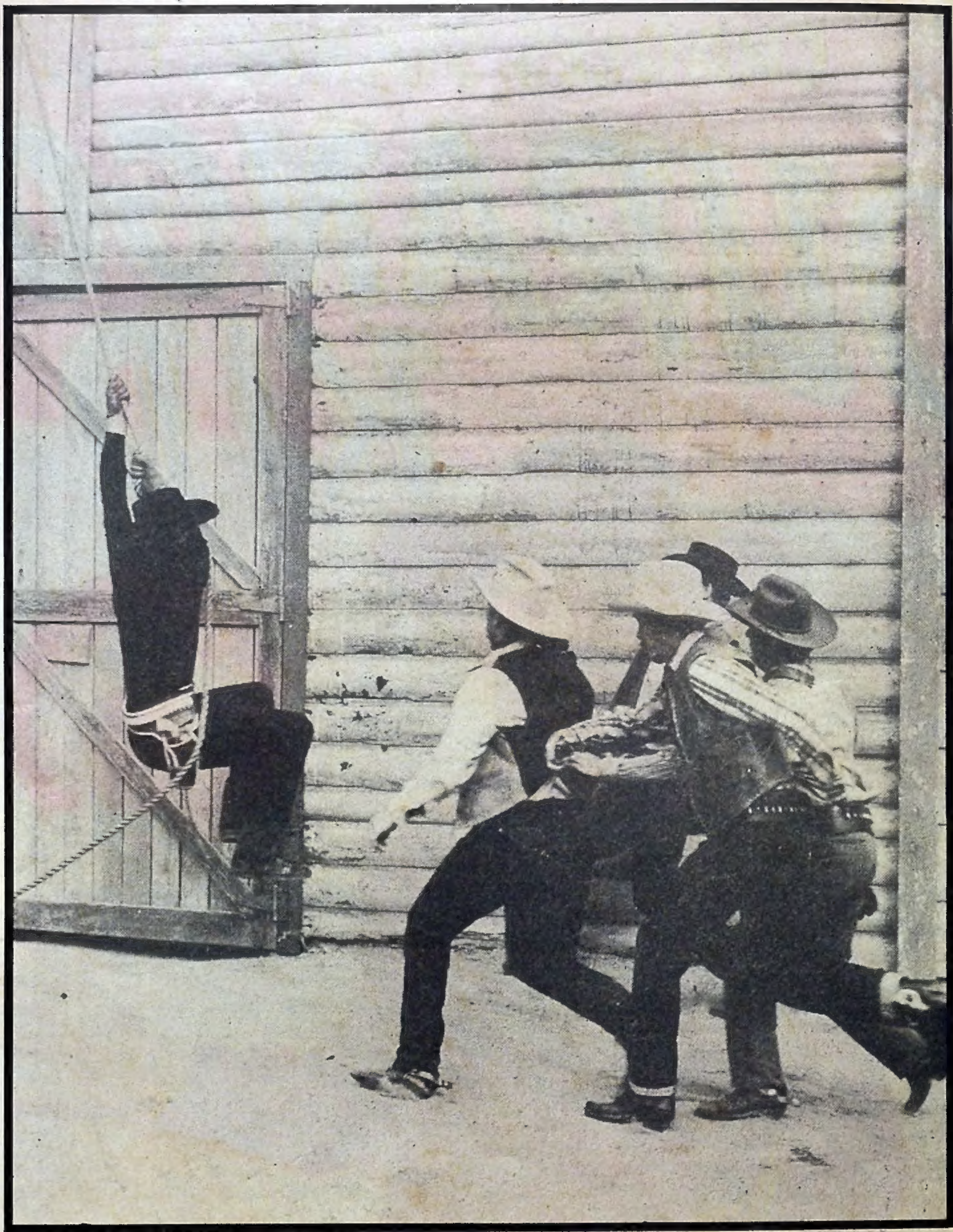
No. 1

10¢



Charles Starrett





## ***THE DURANGO KID* SWINGS INTO ACTION AGAINST FOUR BADMEN!**

Charles Starrett as **THE DURANGO KID**. Vol. 1, No. 1. Published bi-monthly by Magazine Enterprises, Inc., 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y. Publisher, Vincent Sullivan; Editor, Raymond C. Krank. Application for second-class entry is pending at the post office at Akron, Ohio. Subscription in U.S.A., 75¢ for six issues. Entire contents copyrighted 1949 by Magazine Enterprises, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions, other than the title character, appearing in this magazine and those of any living or dead person or institution is intended and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A.



# The DURANGO KID

in  
"FRAUD ON  
THE HOOF"

IN THE WAKE OF THE GREAT MARCH WESTWARD, LITTLE TOWNS LIKE GUN HAMMER GULCH GREW LIKE CACTUS --FAST, WILD AND THORNY! HERE WAS THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE AND THE CODE OF THE DESERT, WHERE JUSTICE WAS A SMOKING BULLET, AND ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVED!

BUT HEROES MARCHED THE TRAIL, TOO--MEN WITH A VISION OF THE GREAT WEST TO BE--BRINGING LAW AND ORDER, SHAPING A CIVILIZATION OUT OF THE WILD OUTLAWRY OF THE BADLANDS. AND ONE OF THE GREATEST OF THESE WAS STEVE BRAND.

BRAND AND HIS SIDE KICK, MUI TY PIKE, SEEMED TO BE JUST TWO ORDINARY COWPOKES --BUT WHEN STEVE RODE HIS GREAT HORSE, RAIDER, AND DONNED HIS BLACK SHIRT AND MASK, HE WAS

**THE DURANGO KID!**  
--STRIKING TERROR INTO THE HEARTS OF THE BRAVEST OWLHOOTS!

HEY! THERE'S SHOOTING DOWN IN THAT HOLLOW!

HYAR WE GO AGAIN, (SIGH)!



BULLETS CRISS-CROSS THE TRAIL SEVEN MILES OUT OF GUN HAMMER GULCH...

THEY'RE GAININ' ON US, ZACK!

GIDDAP, YE ORNERY CAYUSES... GIDDAP!



YUH NO-GOOD, SNAKE-LIVERED OWLHOOTS!



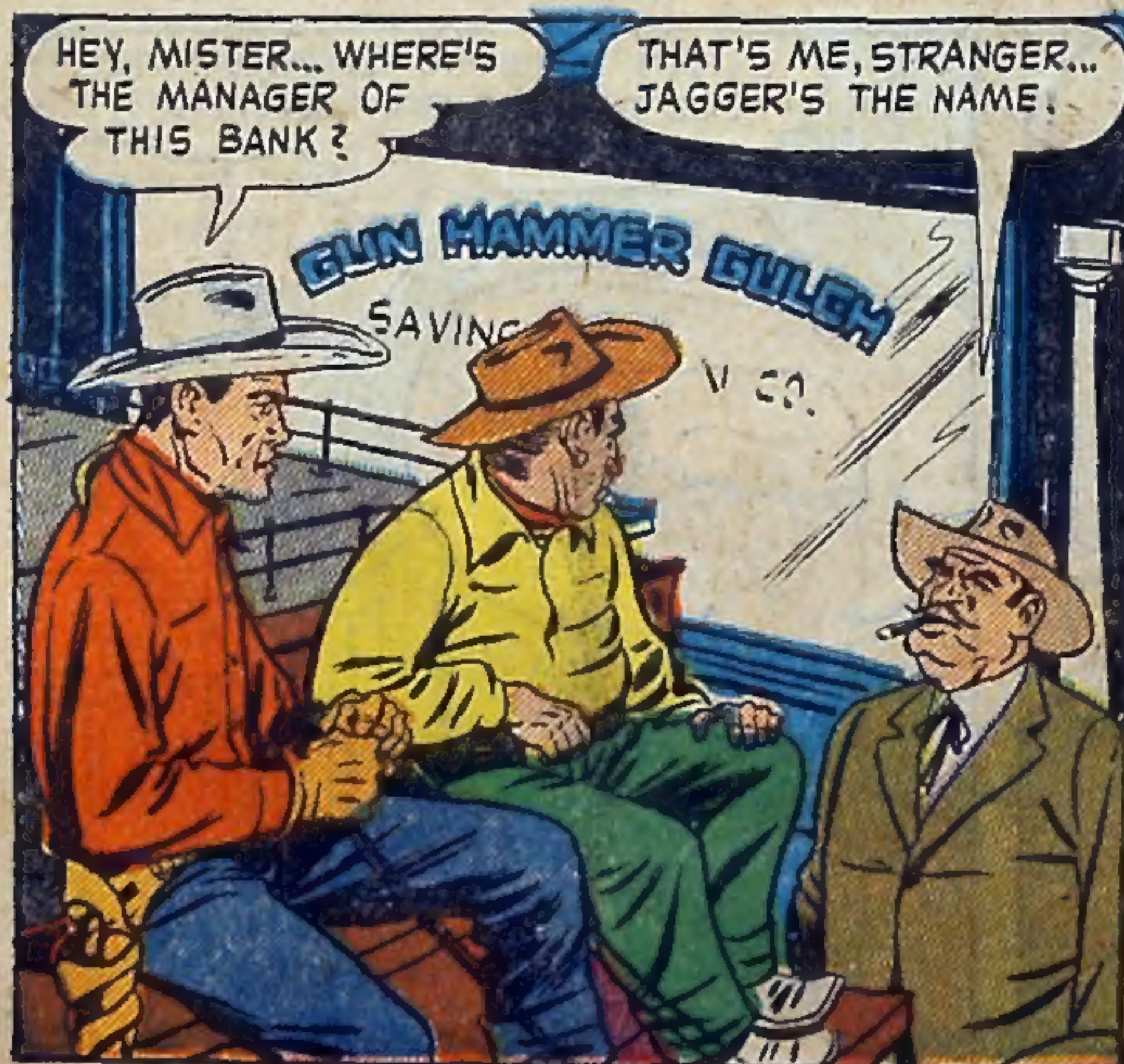


# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID





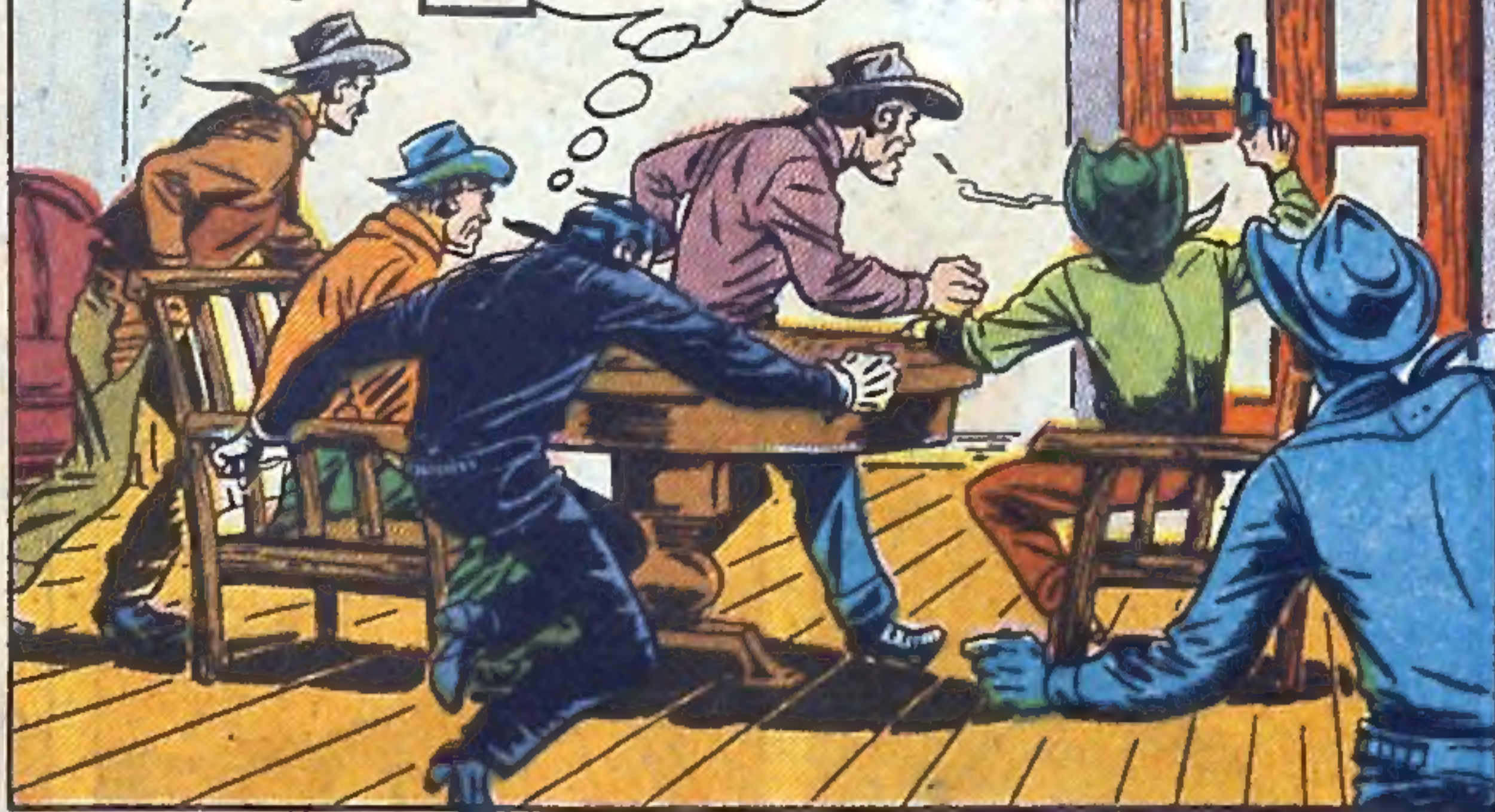
# THE DURANGO KID

BUT OUTSIDE, THE ALERT RAIDER, SENSING TROUBLE, NOSES UP TO THE DOOR OF THE RANCH HOUSE.



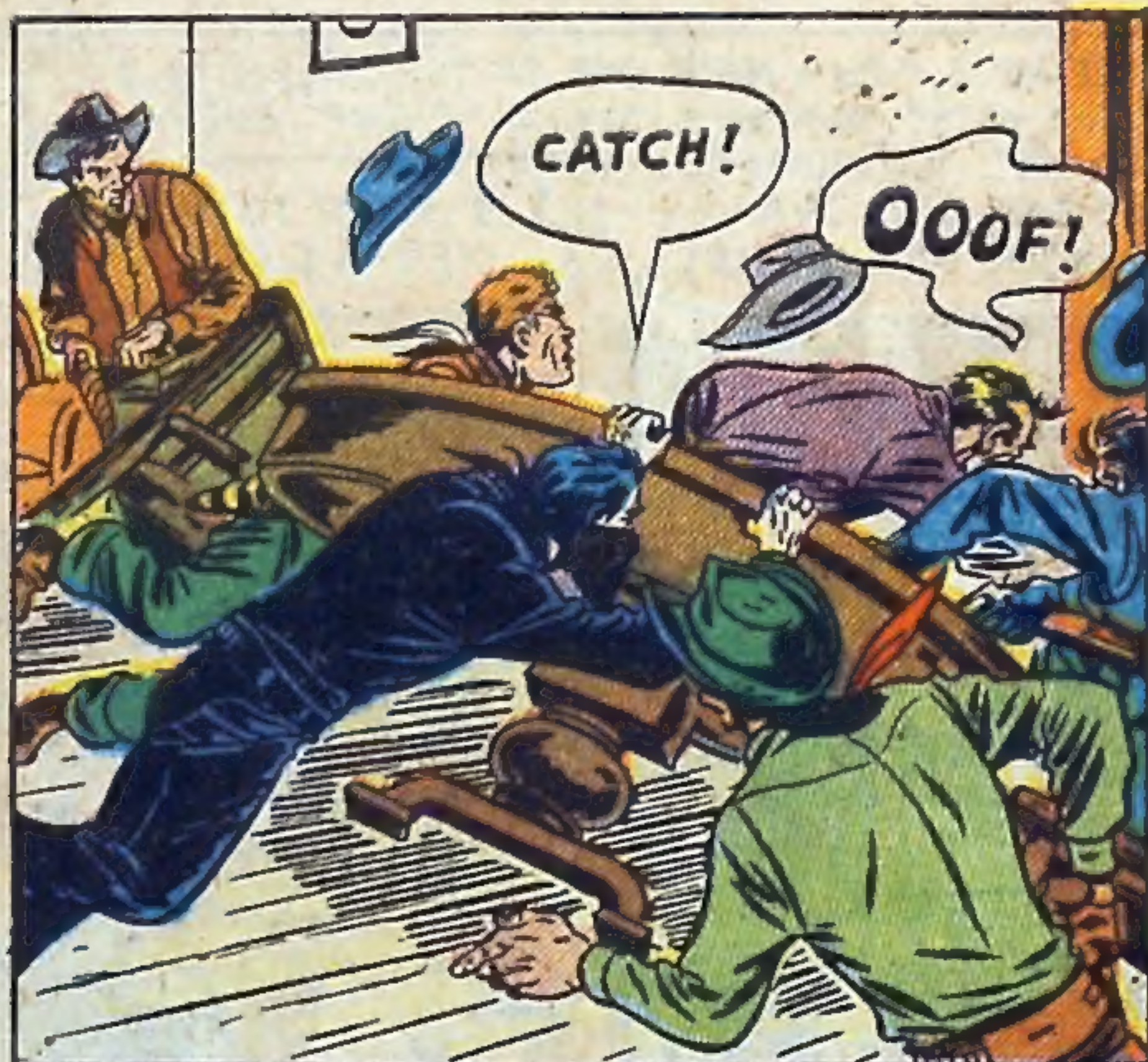
HEY! SOMEBODY AT THUH DOOR! WHUT THUH ---!

THIS IS JUST THE DIVERSION I NEED!



CATCH!

OOOF!



WELL, BOYS, YOU'LL NEVER MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN!



AND THERE'S A LITTLE LESSON I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU, TOO -- AH, THAT GUN!



REACH!



A SHORT TIME LATER...

THAT'LL HOLD YOU FOR A WHILE, I RECKON. HAVE FUN, MEN... I'LL BE BACK FOR YOU IN A LITTLE WHILE!





# THE DURANGO KID

THE RANCHERS ARE COMING IN FOR THEIR PAYOFF FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. LOOKS LIKE **EVERYBODY'S** GOING TO GET A SURPRISE!



GOING TO LEAVE YOU, RAIDER-- THE REST OF THIS JOB IS FOR STEVE BRAND. OUGHT TO MAKE TOWN JUST AFTER DAYBREAK...



DAYBREAK IN GUN HAMMER GULCH.

THERE JUST WASN'T ANYTHING I COULD DO, MEN--I BARELY GOT AWAY WITH MY OWN LIFE! COME IN AND SEE WHAT A FIGHT THERE WAS. I DID THE BEST I COULD TO SAVE YOUR MONEY!



JAGGER, YOU'RE A LIAR! YOU STOLE THAT MONEY YOURSELF!

SAVINGS LOAN CO



THERE HE IS, MEN-- HE'S ONE OF THE OWLHOOTS I FOUGHT WITH! NOW HE'S TRYING TO SHIFT SUSPICION ONTO ME! YOU GOING TO TAKE THE WORD OF A STRANGER AGAINST ME?

I'VE GOT TO PROVE HE'S A LIAR...



YOU'RE NOT ONLY A LIAR, JAGGER-- YOU'RE DOWNRIGHT YELLOW!

WHY, YOU--



THOUGHT I'D GET YOU MAD ENOUGH TO DRAW, JAGGER! YOU FORGOT THAT ARM IS SUPPOSED TO BE IN A SLING!





# THE DURANGO KID



BUT IF IT'S SOME *REAL* BRUISES YOU WANT-- I'LL BE RIGHT GLAD TO OBLIGE!



A FEW KNOCKED-OUT TEETH OUGHT TO FILL IN YOUR ALIBI!



THERE HE IS, MEN--FAKE BANDAGES ON A FAKE BANKER! HE'S BEEN STEALING YOUR MONEY ALL THE TIME, FIGURING TO BUY YOU OUT WHEN YOU WENT BROKE. ENOUGH! YOU'LL FIND ALL YOUR MONEY AND THE REST OF JAGGER'S GUNRIDERS' OUT AT HIS RANCH-HOUSE, WHERE THE DURANGO KID HAS THEM SAFELY TIED UP!



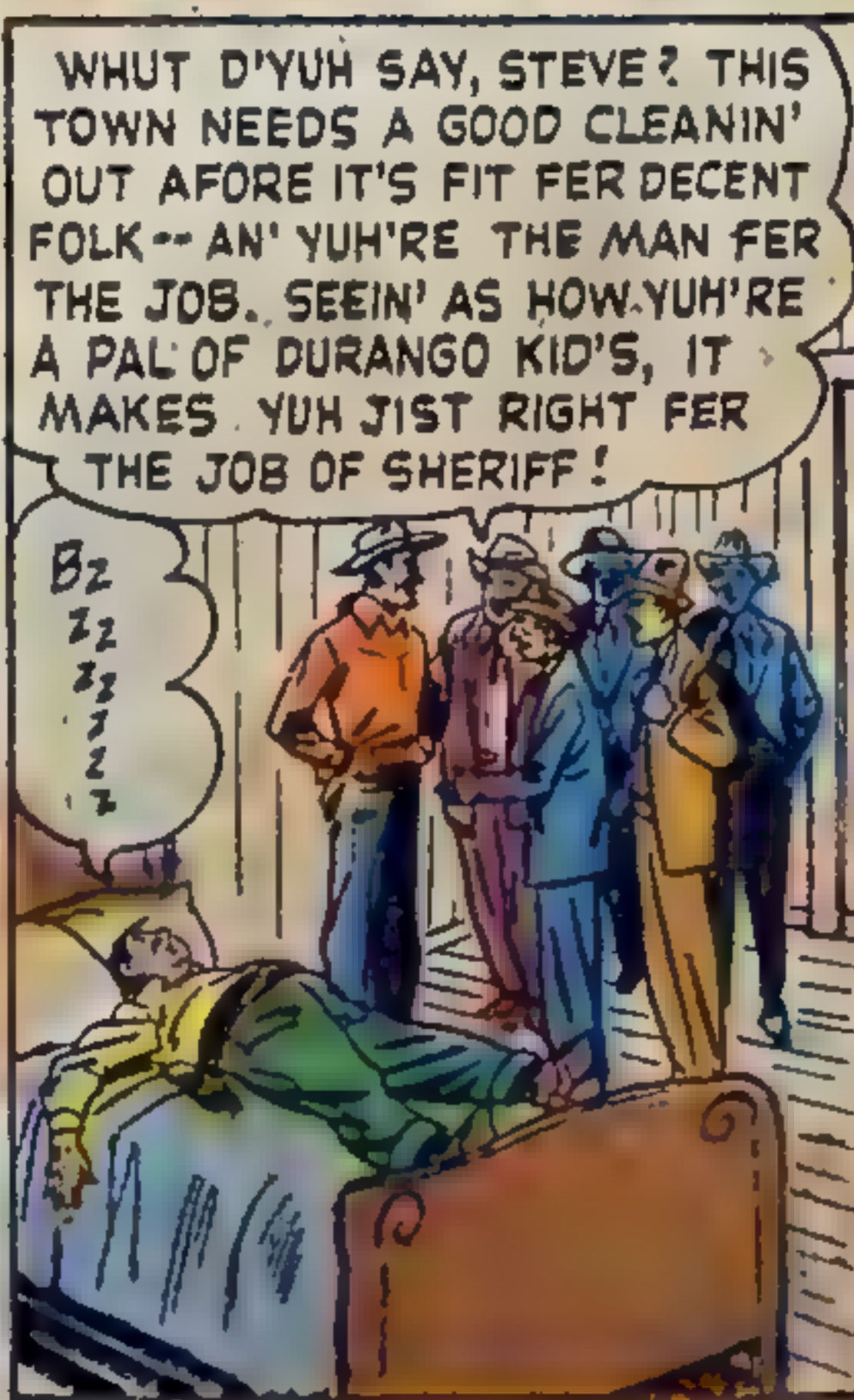
ALL BUT ONE OF JAGGER'S OWLHOOTS, THAT IS! THERE'S ANOTHER ONE JUST OUTSIDE MY ROOM, GENTS!



BUZZZ... MUMBLE... MUMBLE...

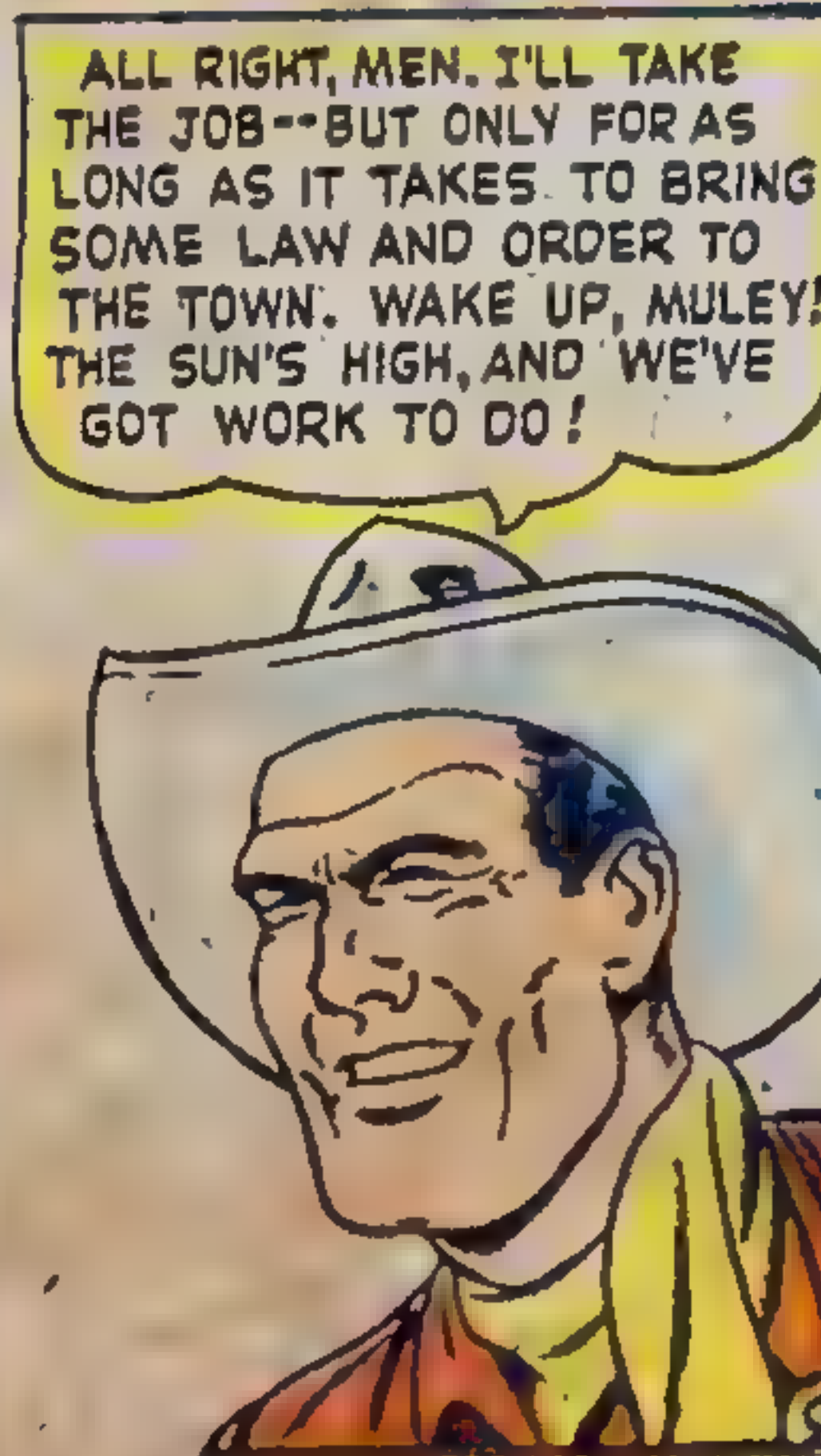


"AND SO THE LITTLE PRINCE MARRIED THE SWEET LITTLE SHERPHERDESS... (YAWN)... OUCH!... AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER"--HUH? SAY, I THOUGHT YUH'D NEVER GIT BACK!



WHUT D'YUH SAY, STEVE? THIS TOWN NEEDS A GOOD CLEANIN' OUT AFORE IT'S FIT FER DECENT FOLK-- AN' YUH'RE THE MAN FER THE JOB. SEEIN' AS HOW YUH'RE A PAL OF DURANGO KID'S, IT MAKES YUH JIST RIGHT FER THE JOB OF SHERIFF!

Bz  
Zz  
Zz  
Zz  
Zz



ALL RIGHT, MEN. I'LL TAKE THE JOB--BUT ONLY FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES TO BRING SOME LAW AND ORDER TO THE TOWN. WAKE UP, MULEY! THE SUN'S HIGH, AND WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO!



# The DURANGO KID

IN  
BLOOD  
OF THE  
PIONEERS

**T**REACHERY RODE THE BLOOD-SOAKED TRAIL OF THE PIONEERS! THAT TOUGH BREED OF AMERICANS WHO HACKED A CIVILIZATION OUT OF WILDERNESS FOUND THEIR ROAD BLOCKED BY MEN LIKE DUTCH BRILLER AND BUCK DAWSON--MEN SO SOAKED IN EVIL THAT THEY STOPPED AT NOTHING, NOT EVEN THE MURDER OF INNOCENT WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THEIR QUEST FOR MONEY AND LAND!

**B**UT THEY RECKONED WITHOUT STEVE BRAND, BETTER KNOWN AS THE DURANGO KID, WHO COULD RIDE FASTER, SHOOT STRAIGHTER AND HIT HARDER THAN THE BEST OF THEM!



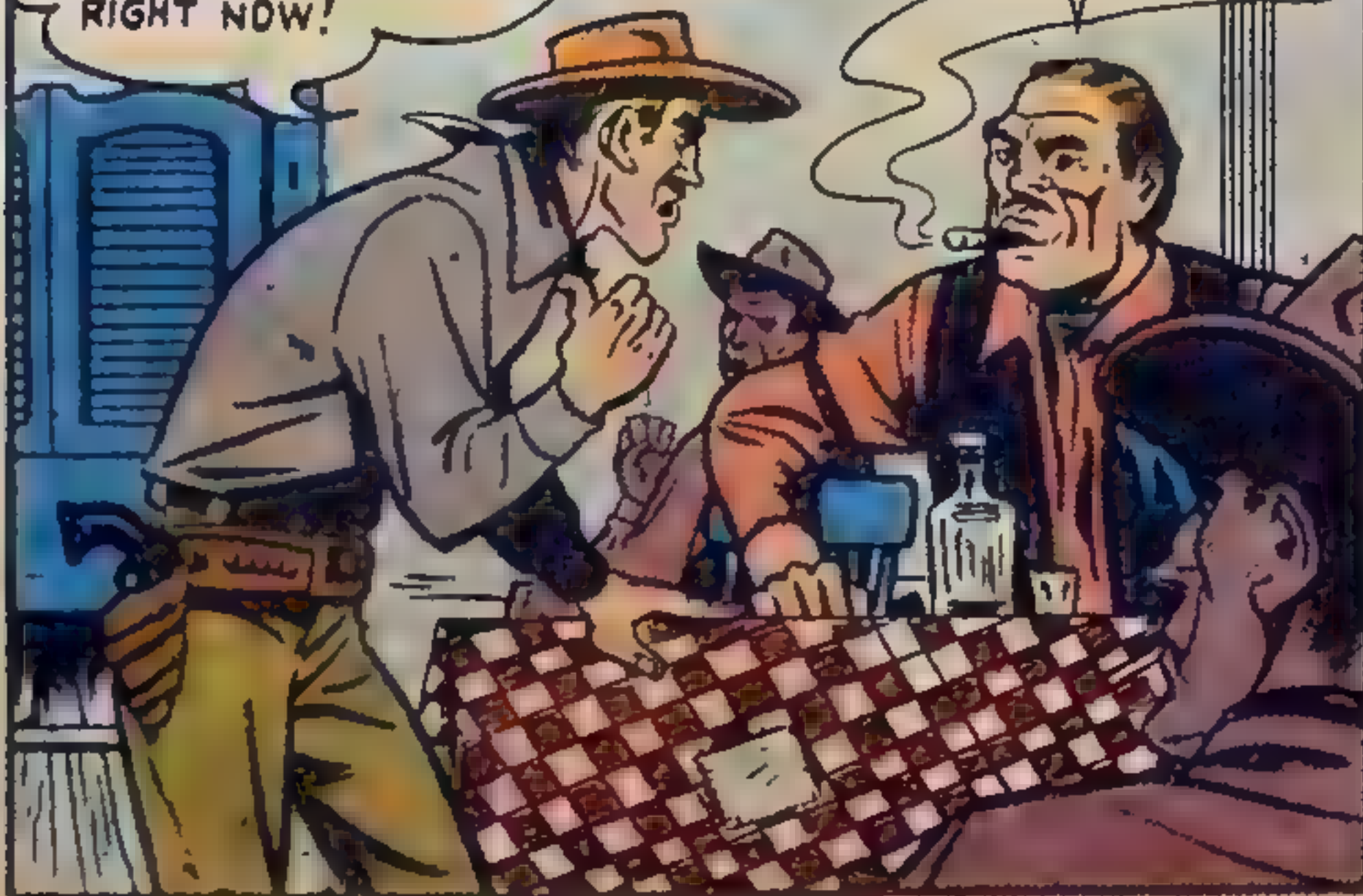
"THE HARD LUCK SALOON" OF GUN HAMMER GULCH...

DAW-GONE IF THET NEWCOMER STEVE BRAND, AIN'T TOOK OVER THE JOB OF SHERIFF! HE'S RIDIN' OWLHOOTS OUTA TOWN RIGHT NOW!

YEAH? THEY AIN'T NO ROOM IN THIS HERE TOWN FOR LAWMEN!

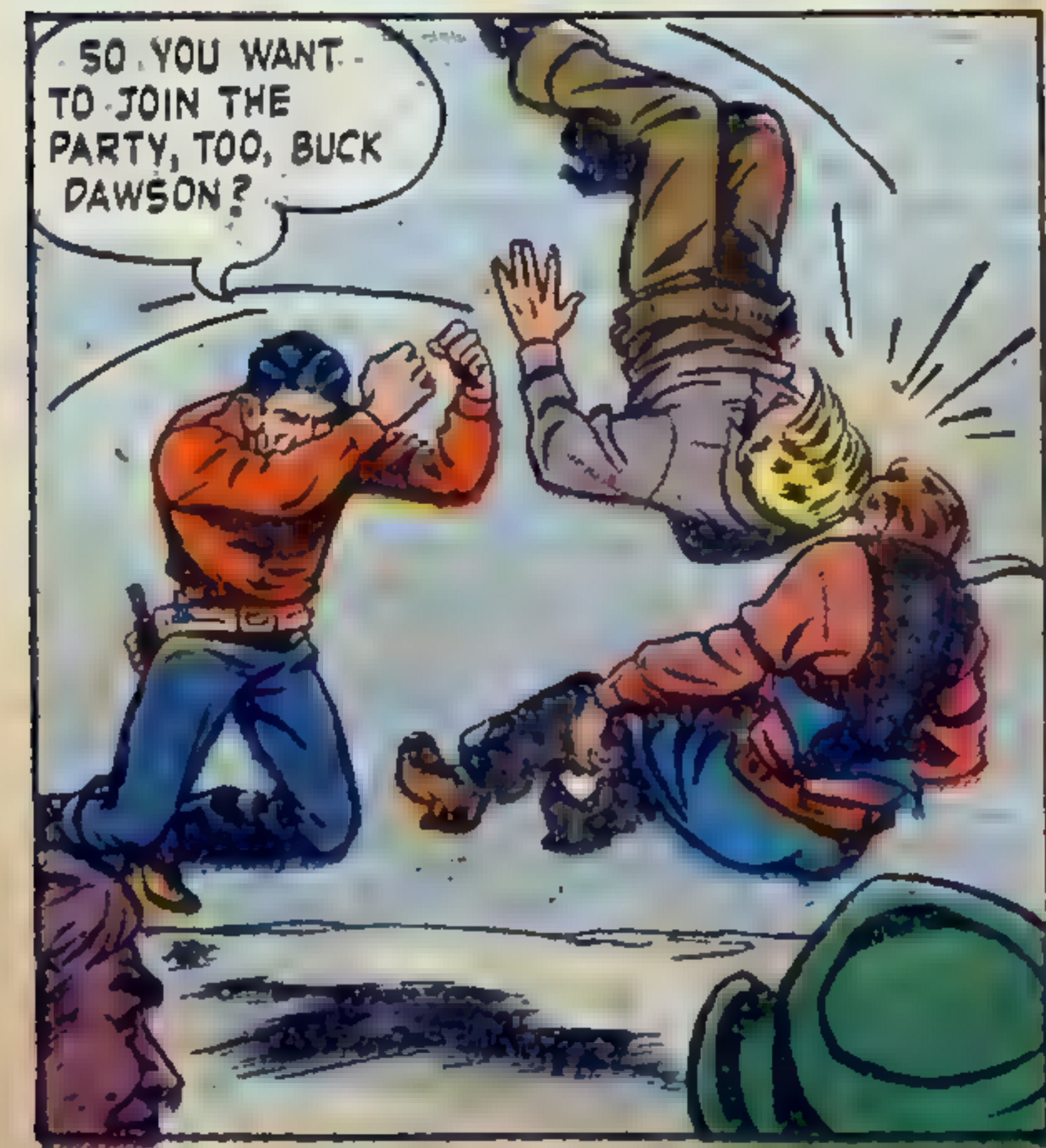
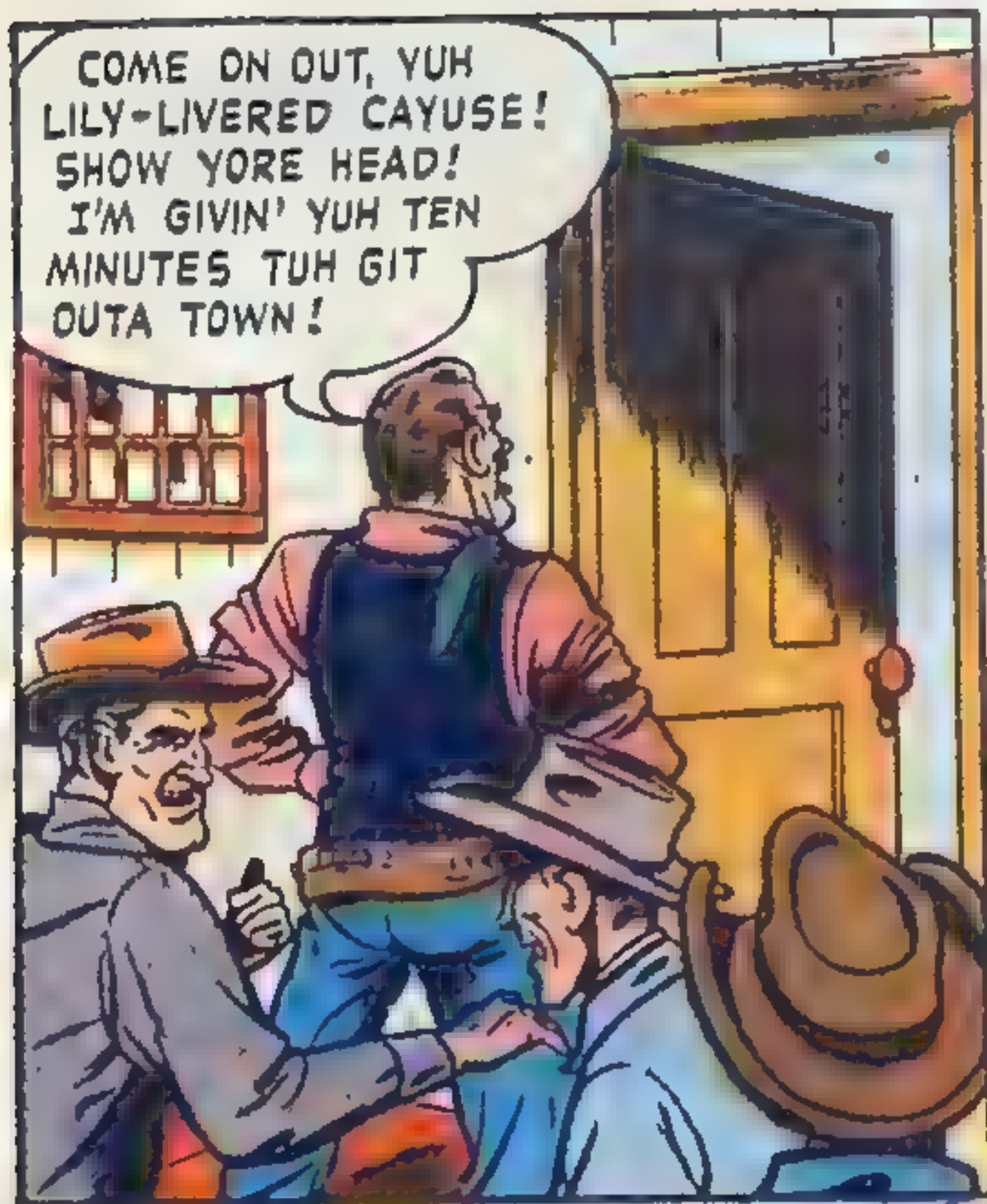
FOLLEY ME, MEN--AN' WATCH THE FUN! WE'RE GOIN' TUH STRING UP THIS HERE SHERIFF JUST LIKE WE DONE THE OTHERS!

HOT DIGGERTY!



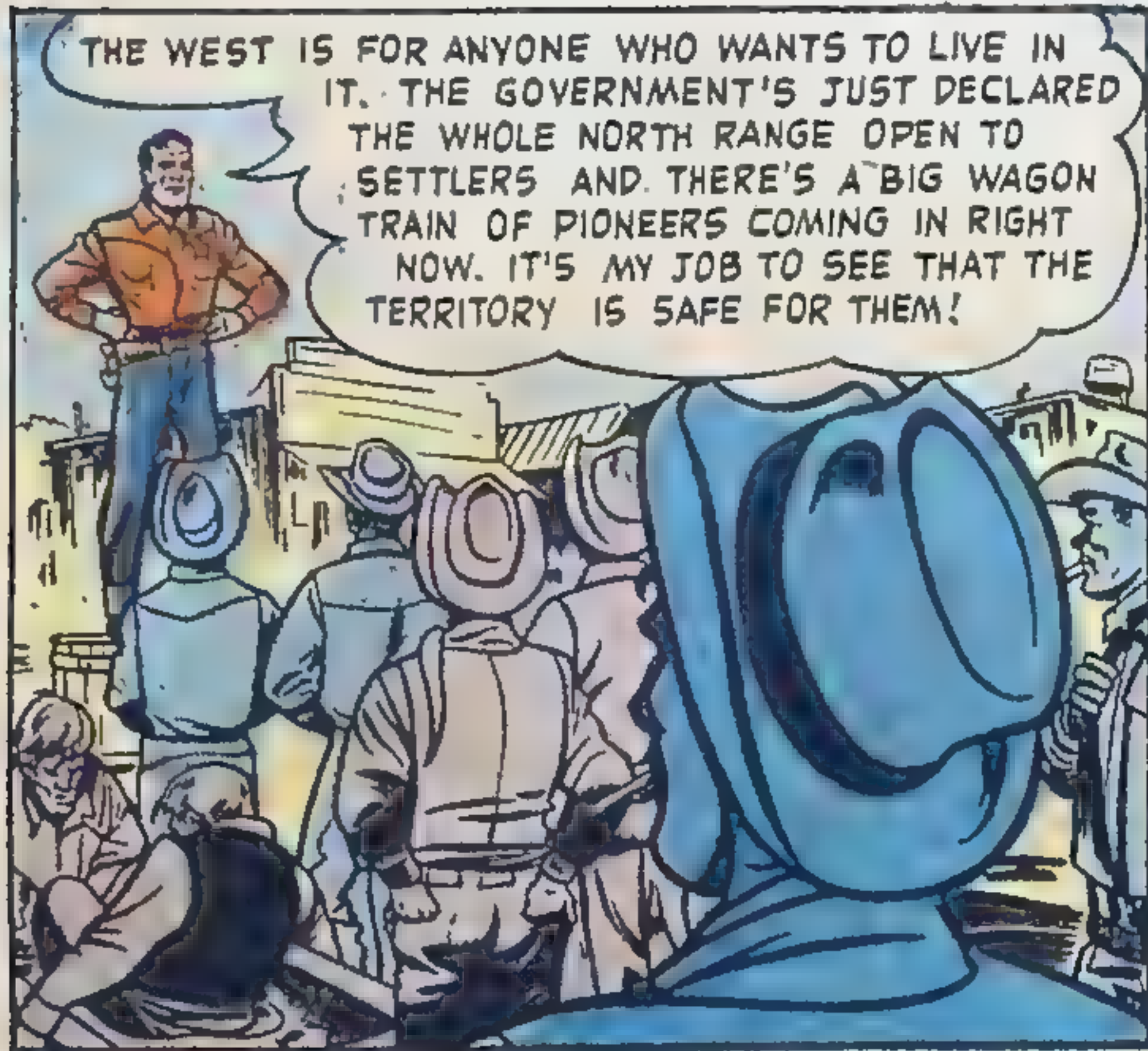


# THE DURANGO KID

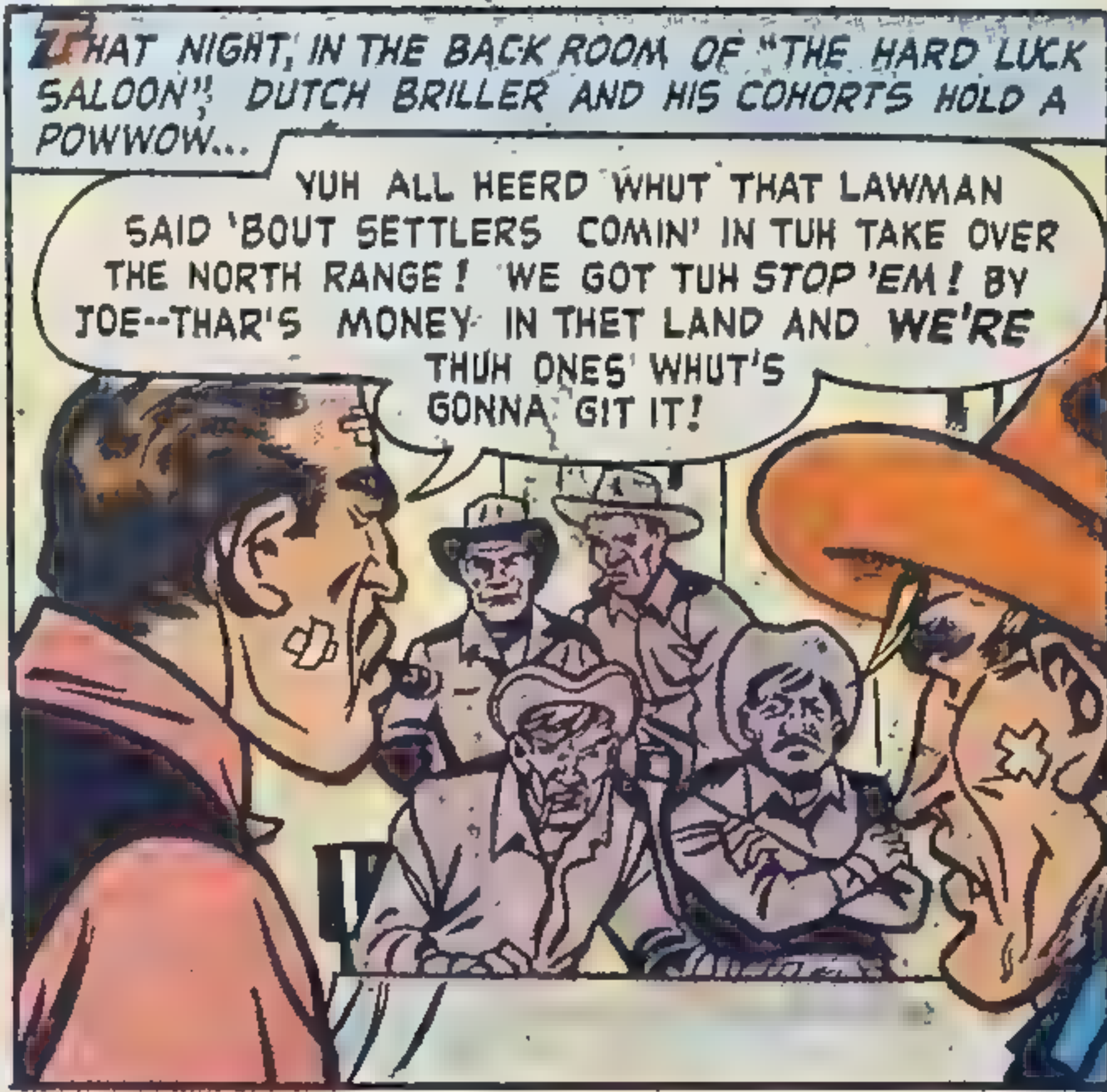




# THE DURANGO KID



THE WEST IS FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO LIVE IN IT. THE GOVERNMENT'S JUST DECLARED THE WHOLE NORTH RANGE OPEN TO SETTLERS AND THERE'S A BIG WAGON TRAIN OF PIONEERS COMING IN RIGHT NOW. IT'S MY JOB TO SEE THAT THE TERRITORY IS SAFE FOR THEM!



THAT NIGHT, IN THE BACK ROOM OF "THE HARD LUCK SALOON", DUTCH BRILLER AND HIS COHORTS HOLD A POWWOW...

YUH ALL HEERD WHUT THAT LAWMAN SAID 'BOUT SETTLERS COMIN' IN TUH TAKE OVER THE NORTH RANGE! WE GOT TUH STOP 'EM! BY JOE--THAR'S MONEY IN THET LAND AND WE'RE THUH ONES WHUT'S GONNA GIT IT!

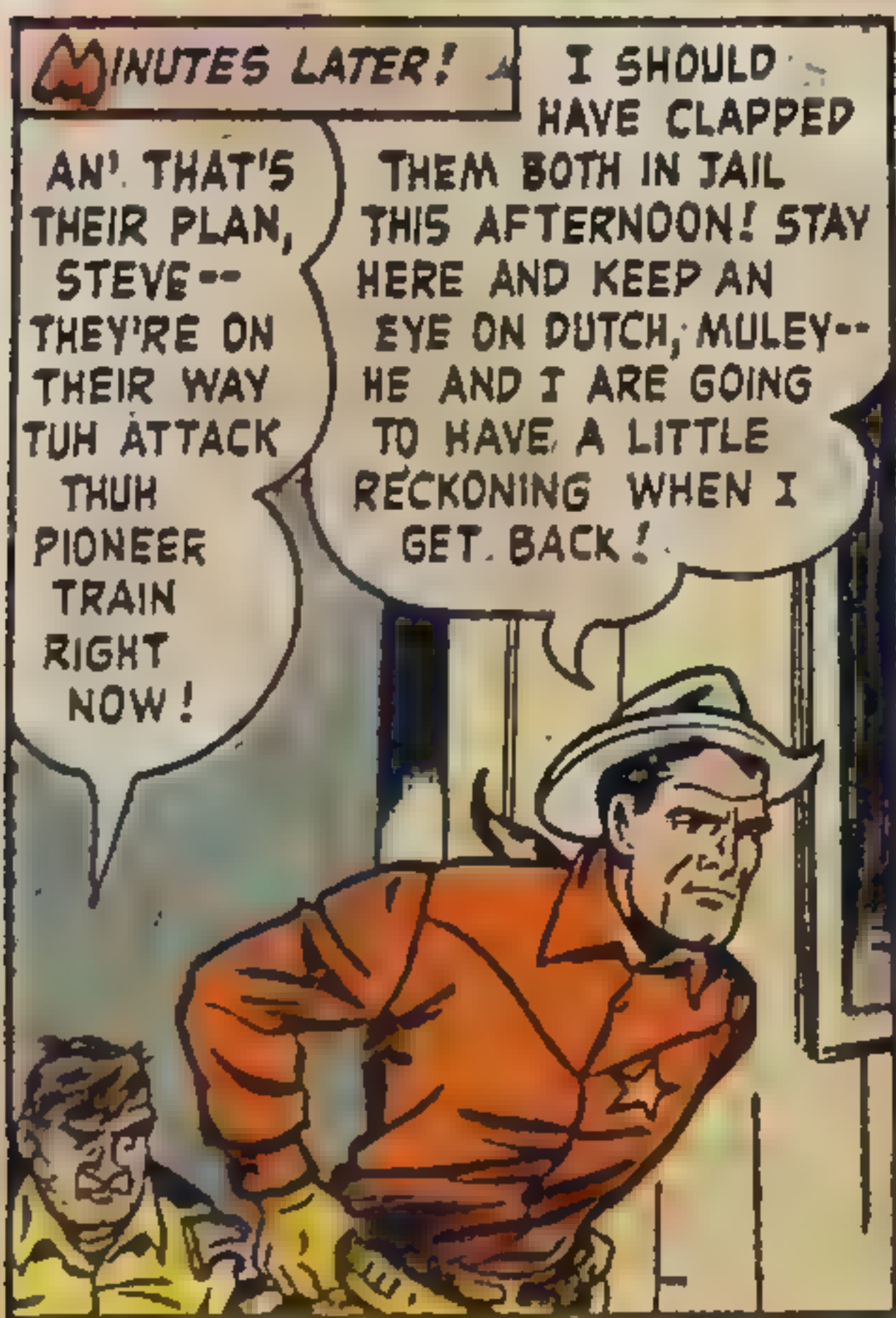


BUCK, GIT ALL YORE MEN TOGETHER AN' DRESS 'EM UP LIKE INJUNS. THEN YUH GO RIGHT OUT AN' MOP UP THET WAGON TRAIN...



...THUH INJUNS'LL GIT BLAMED FER IT AN'. THAT'S GONNA CAUSE MORE INJUN WARS, SEE?

I GIT YUH, DUTCH! THUH MORE INJUN WARS, THE FEWER SETTLERS COMIN' OUT HERE-- AN' WE GOT THE LAND ALL TO OURSELVES!

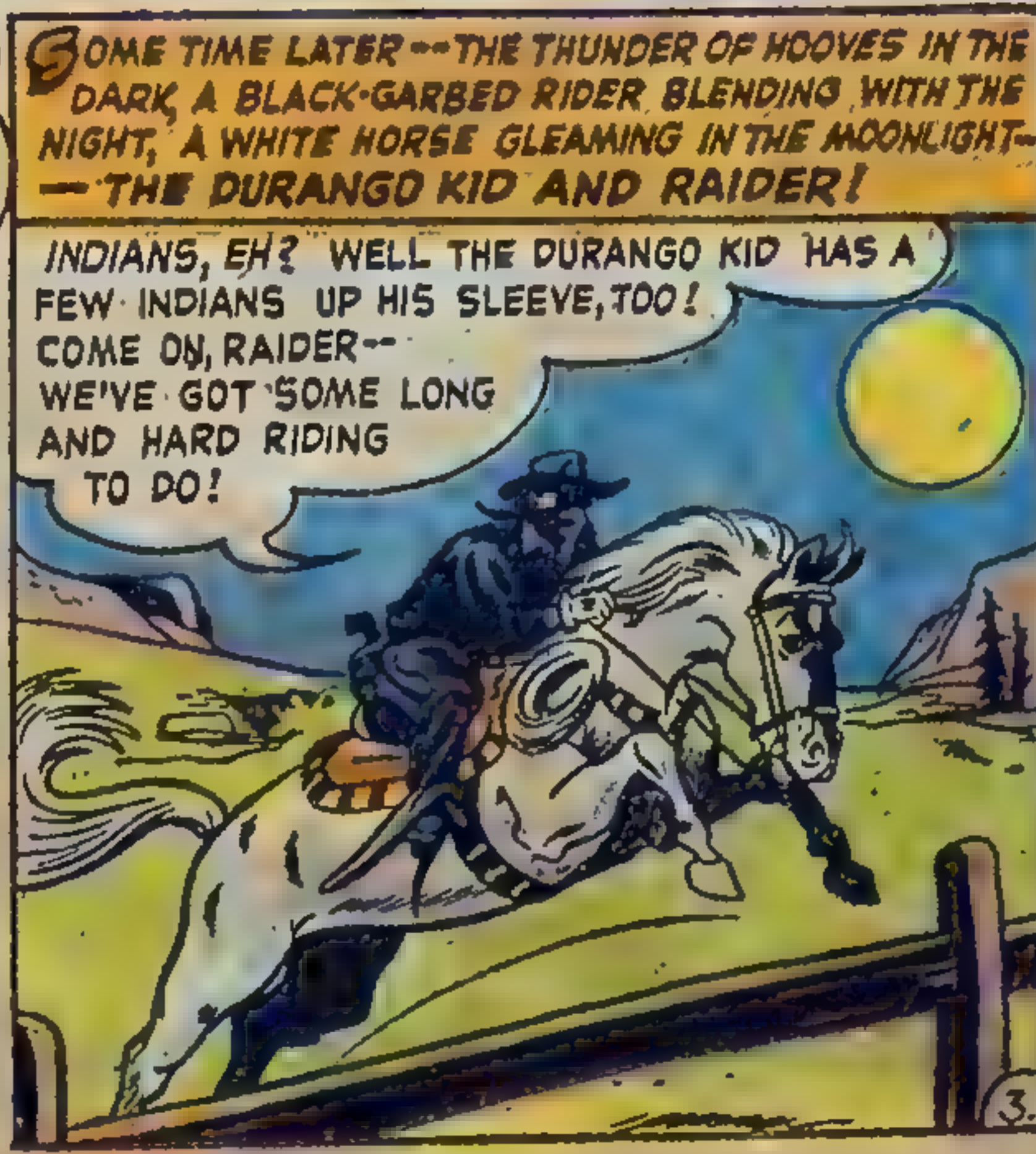


MINUTES LATER!

AN' THAT'S THEIR PLAN, STEVE-- THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY TUH ATTACK THUH PIONEER TRAIN RIGHT NOW!

I SHOULD HAVE CLAPPED THEM BOTH IN JAIL THIS AFTERNOON! STAY HERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON DUTCH; MULEY-- HE AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE RECKONING WHEN I GET BACK!

BUT FOR NOW--THE BIG THING IS TO PROTECT THAT WAGON TRAIN! FIRST--OUT TO THE CAVE... THIS IS A JOB FOR THE DURANGO KID!



SOME TIME LATER--THE THUNDER OF HOOVES IN THE DARK, A BLACK-GARBED RIDER BLENDING WITH THE NIGHT, A WHITE HORSE GLEAMING IN THE MOONLIGHT-- THE DURANGO KID AND RAIDER!

INDIANS, EH? WELL THE DURANGO KID HAS A FEW INDIANS UP HIS SLEEVE, TOO! COME ON, RAIDER-- WE'VE GOT SOME LONG AND HARD RIDING TO DO!



# THE DURANGO KID

**A FEW HOURS LATER, IN THE COUNCIL TENT OF CHIEF LITTLE WOLF...**

...SO THAT IS THE STORY, LITTLE WOLF--THESE EVIL MEN SEEK TO BRING DISGRACE UPON THE GREAT BLACKFEET NATION. THEY DESIRE WAR AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE. WILL YOU HELP ME?

DURANGO, GOOD FRIEND OF INDIAN PEOPLE--LITTLE WOLF HELP! DRUMMER! SOUND THE CALL FOR WAR! HAVE ALL BRAVES ASSEMBLE FOR ACTION!

BLESS YOU, LITTLE WOLF! MEANWHILE--I CAN'T WAIT!

I HAVE TO TRY TO REACH THE WAGON TRAIN BEFORE DAWN, BEFORE BUCK DAWSON AND HIS OWLHOOTS GET THERE!

**DAWN!** AFTER A NIGHT OF BREAKNECK CROSS-COUNTRY RIDING ONLY A HORSE LIKE RAIDER COULD TAKE...

THERE'S THE WAGON TRAIN! AND THERE--DAWSON'S MEN! COME ON, RAIDER--LET'S GO! AT LEAST WE CAN PREVENT THEM FROM BEING SURPRISED!

WHUT THUH! THE DURANGO KID! WE HEARD ABOUT YUH!

HURRY! FORM YOUR WAGON TRAIN INTO A BATTLE CIRCLE! YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE ATTACKED BY FAKE INDIANS! QUICK--NO TIME TO LOSE!

GET THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN UNDER THE WAGONS AND COVER THEM WITH MATTRESSES!

MA-- I'M SKEERED!

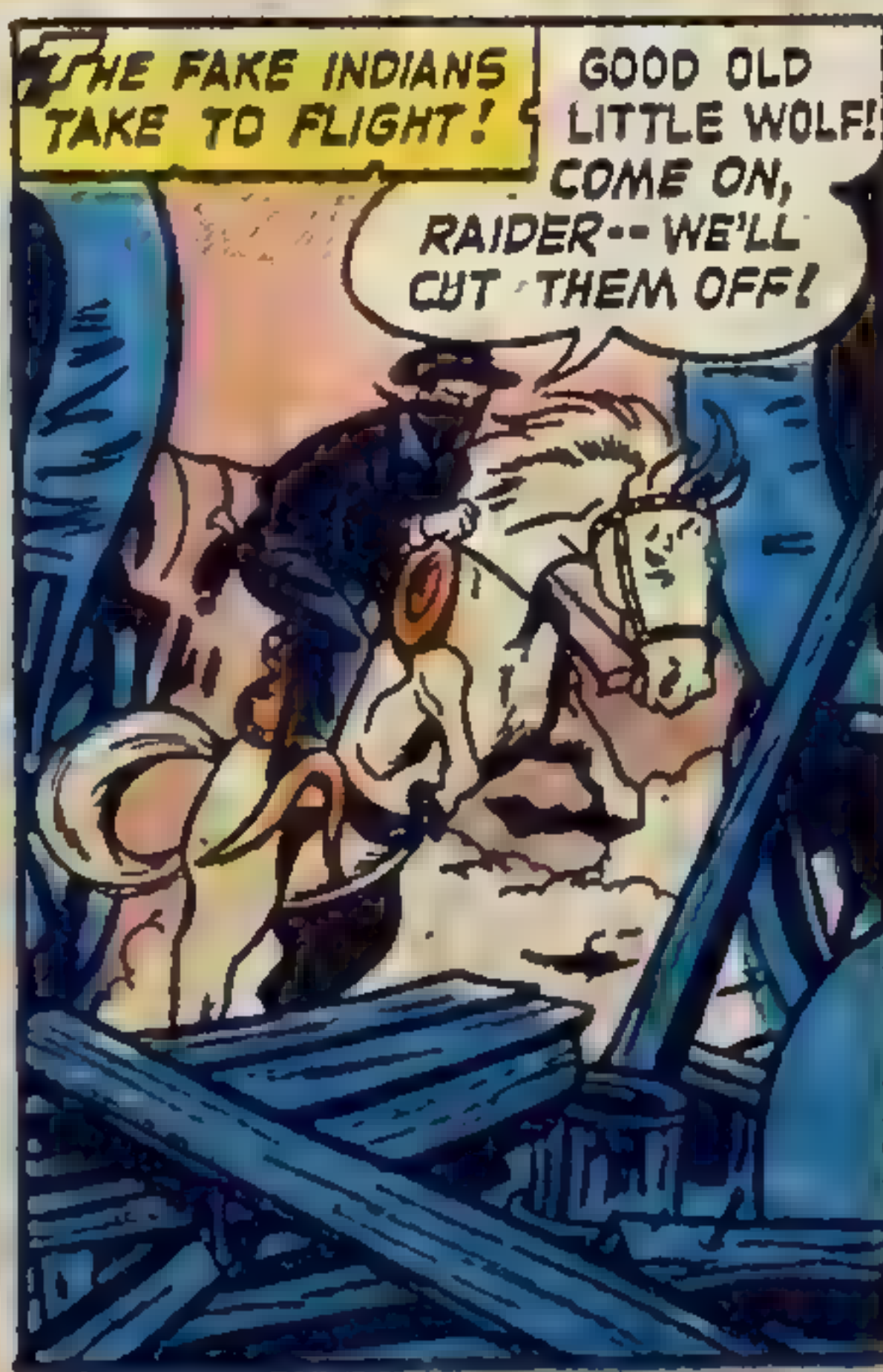
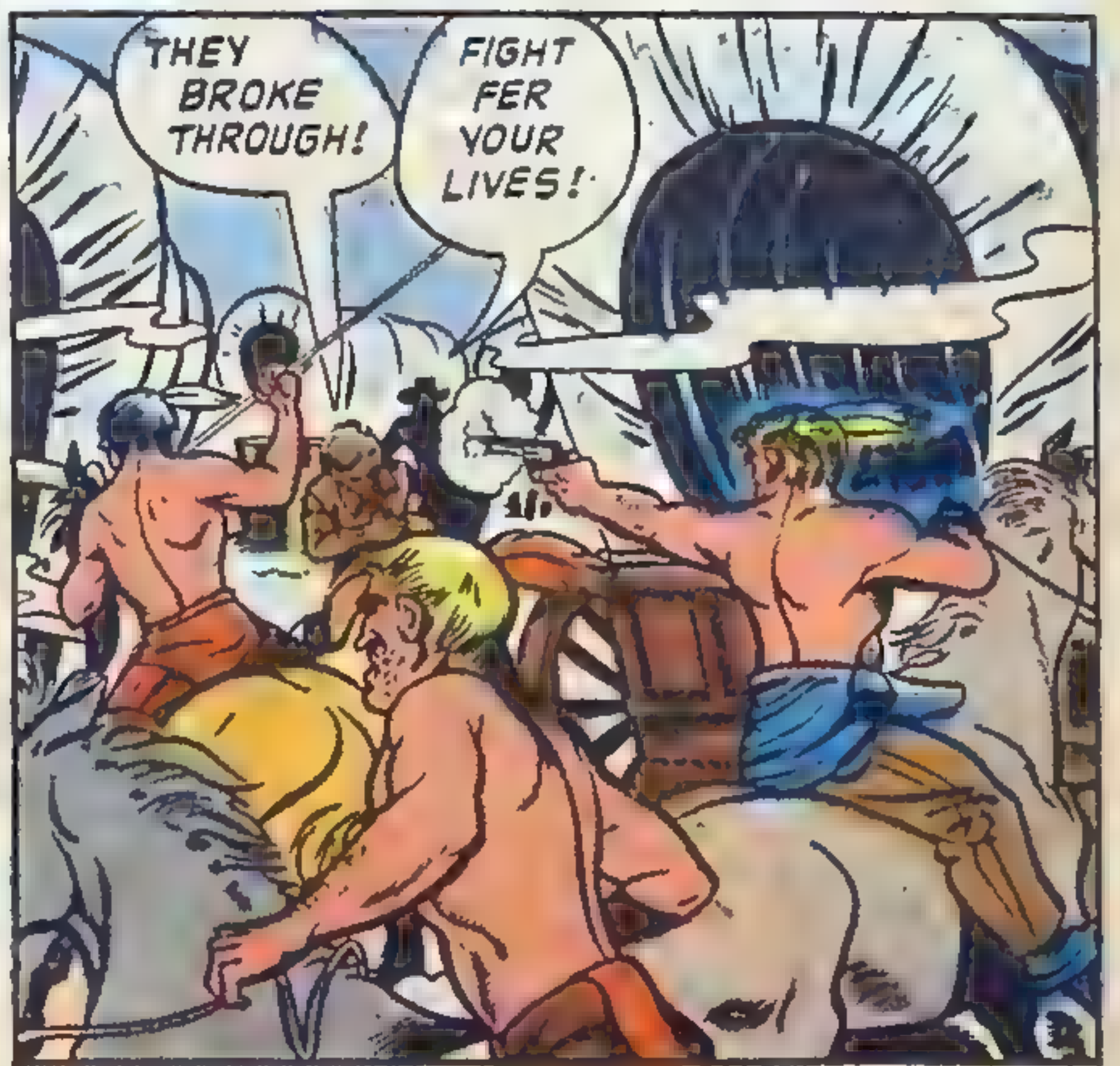
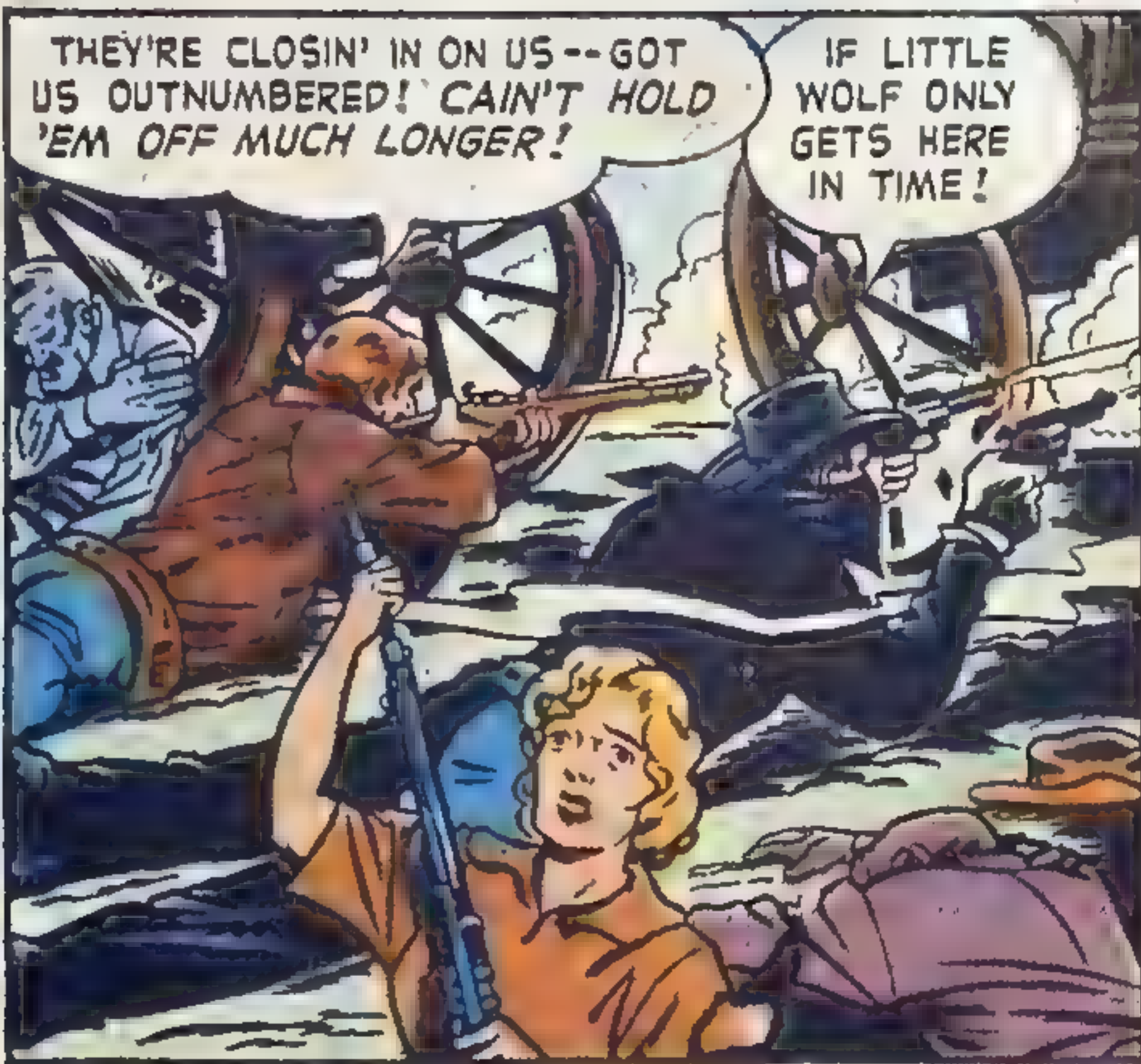
HUSH!

HERE THEY COME! STEADY, MEN!

AIM STRAIGHT, BOYS--DON'T WASTE A BULLET ON THEM VARMINTS!



# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID



THIS OUGHT TO STOP YOU!



CAUGHT BETWEEN THE DURANGO KID AND LITTLE WOLF'S BRAVES, DAWSON AND HIS MEN ARE THROWN INTO PANIC...

BUCK DAWSON--THOUGHT THAT WAS YOU BEHIND ALL THAT PAINT!



THIS IS JUST THE FIRST INSTALLMENT ON WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO GET FROM ME LATER, DAWSON!



THANKS, LITTLE WOLF--WE OWE YOU A GREAT DEBT! I'VE GOT TO BE GOING--WILL YOU BRING THE SETTLERS SAFELY INTO TOWN?

IT IS I WHO THANK YOU, DURANGO--FOR THE CHANCE TO DEFEND THE HONOR OF MY PEOPLE!



YOU'VE HAD A HARD NIGHT, RAIDER--BUT IN JUST A LITTLE WHILE, YOU'LL BE BACK AT THE CAVE. THE REST OF THIS JOB IS FOR STEVE BRAND...



HOURS LATER, SHERIFF STEVE BRAND REACHES GUN HAMMER GULCH...

ALL RIGHT, MULEY--WHERE IS HE?

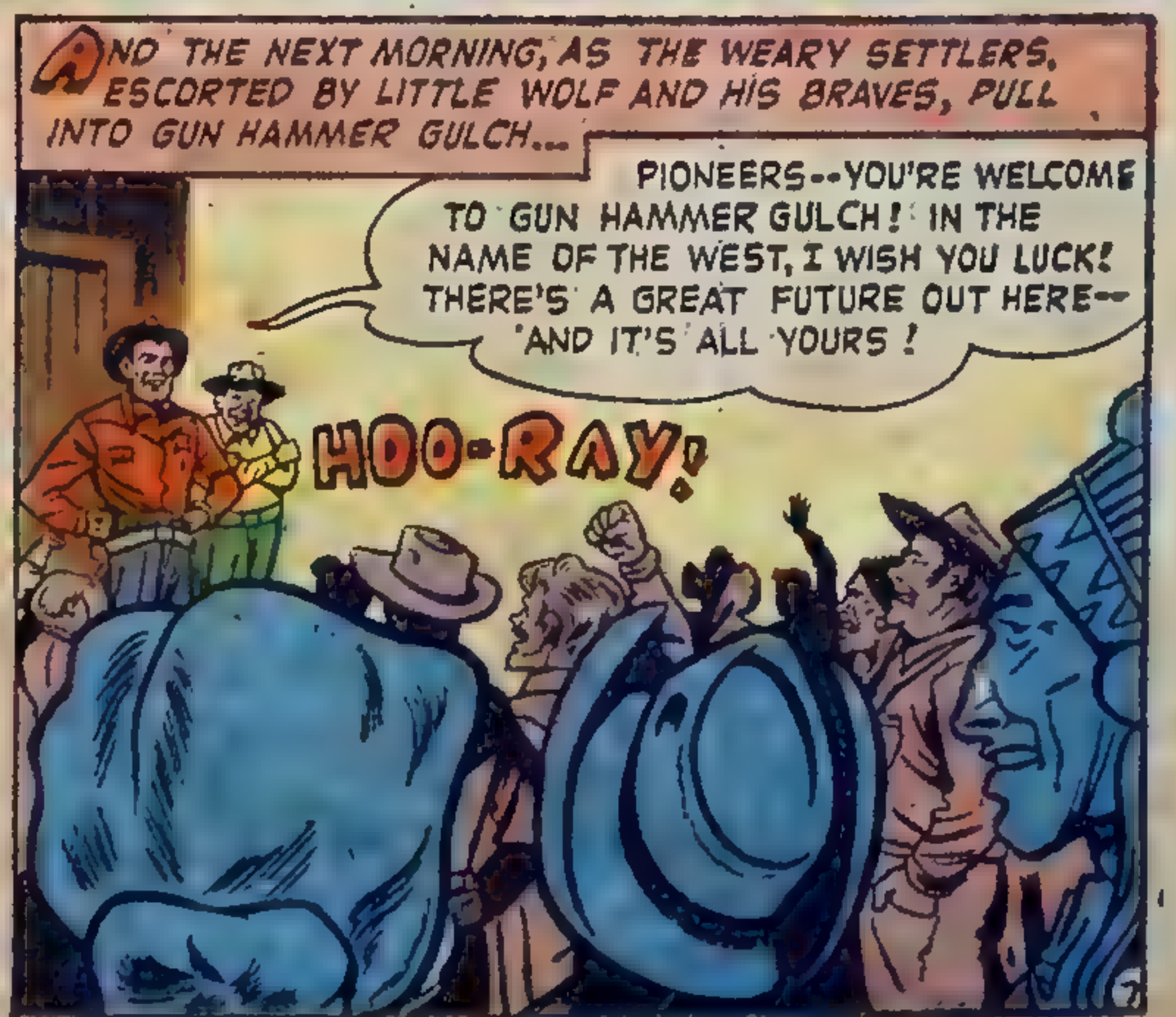
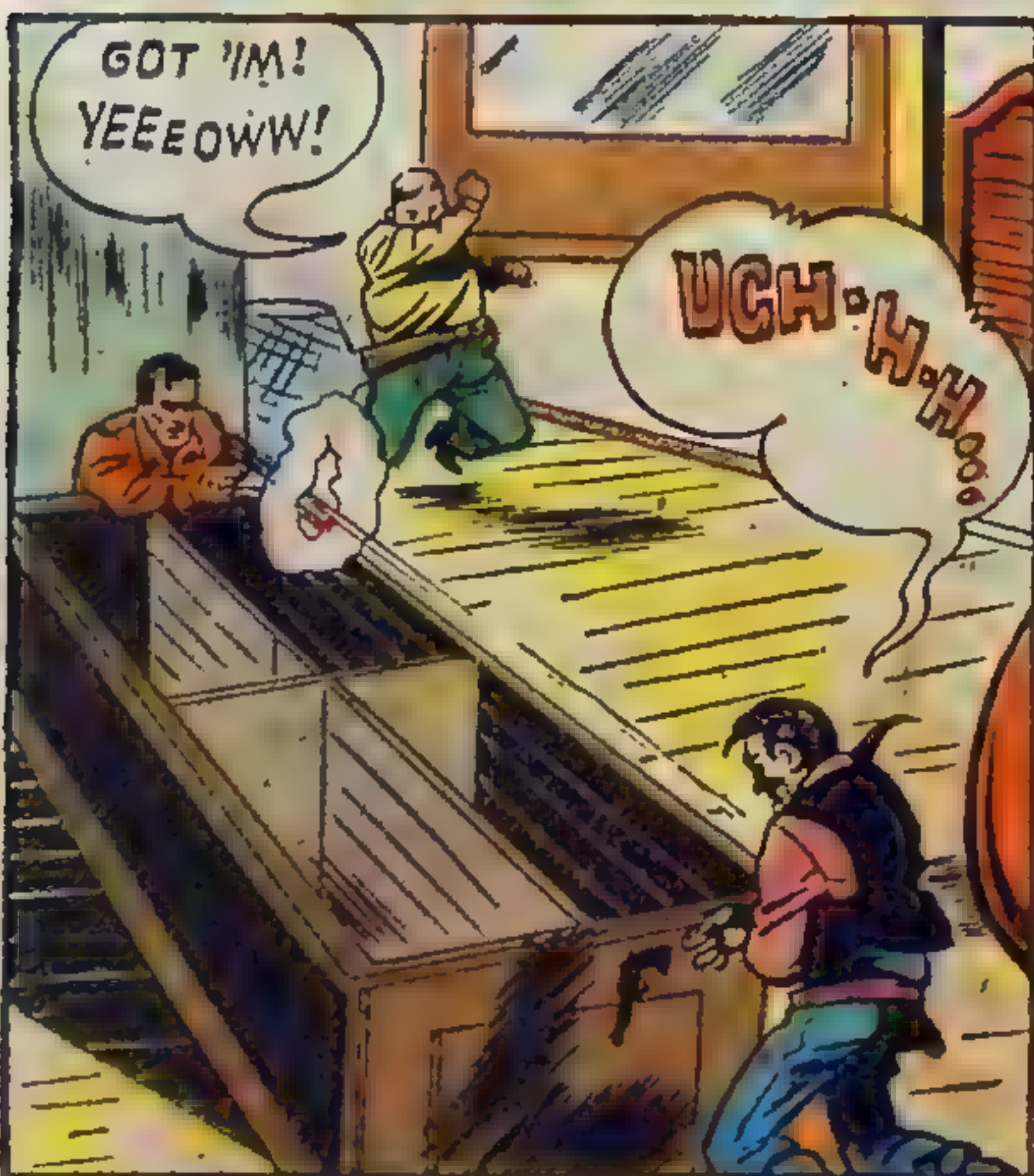
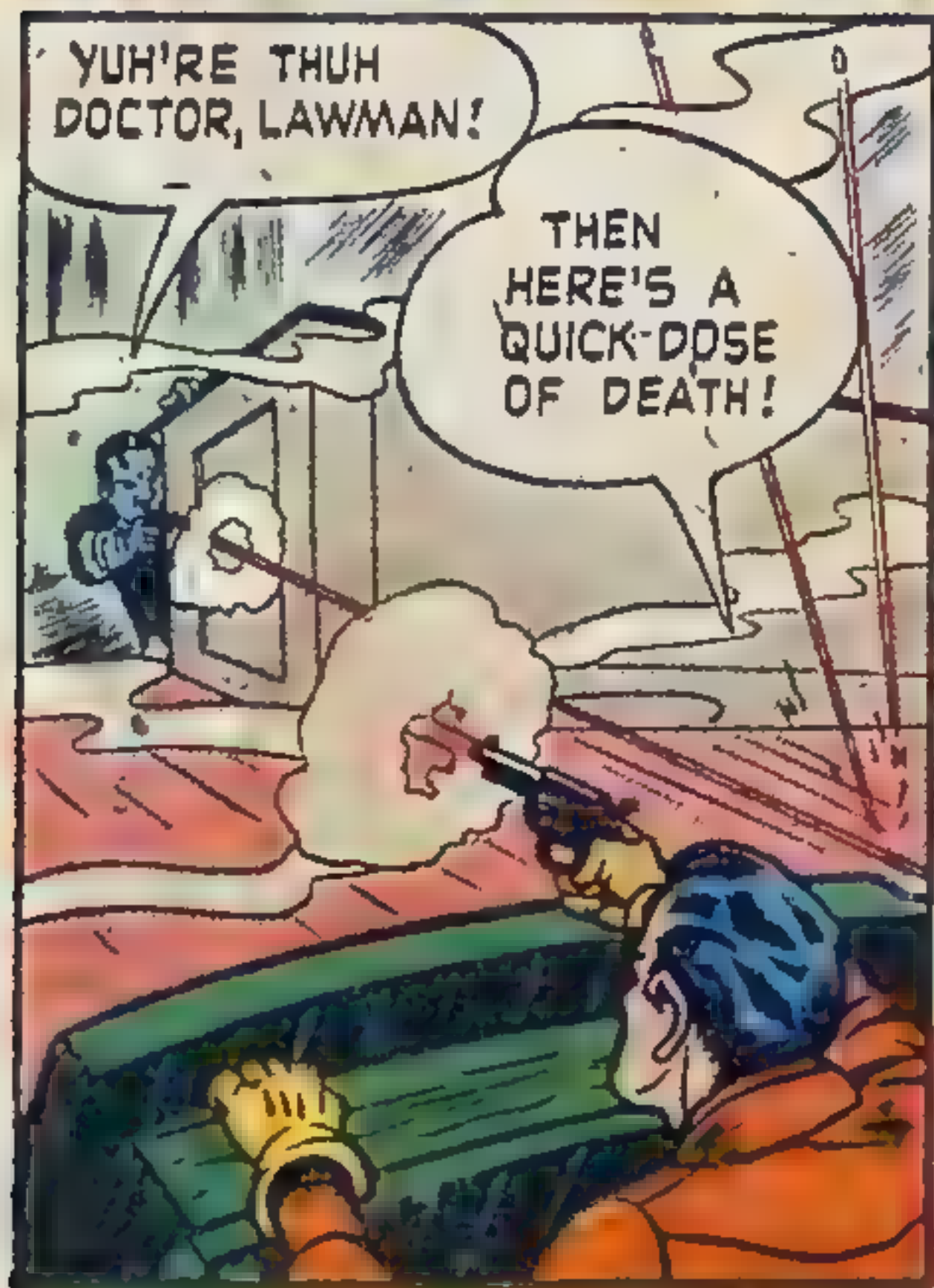
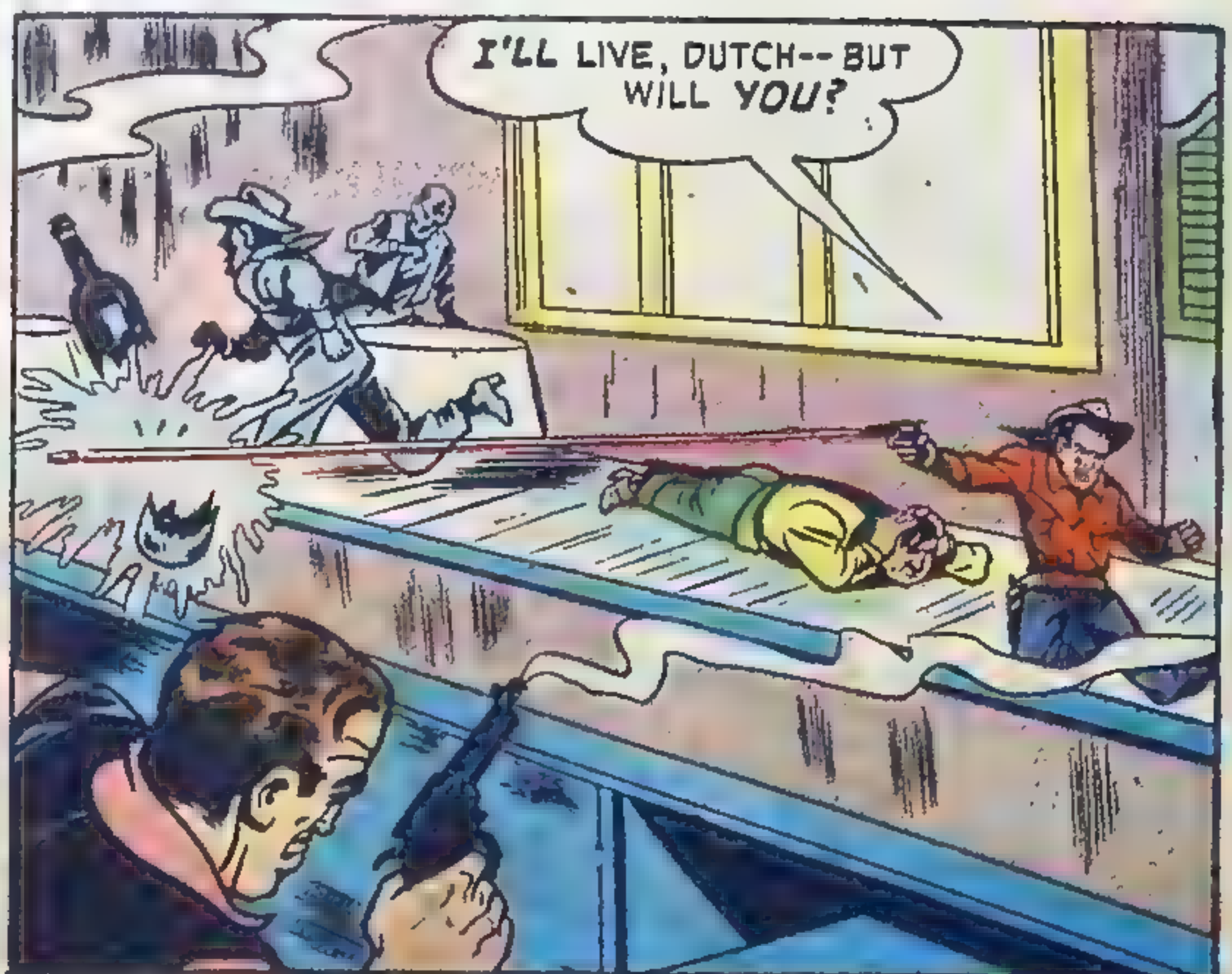
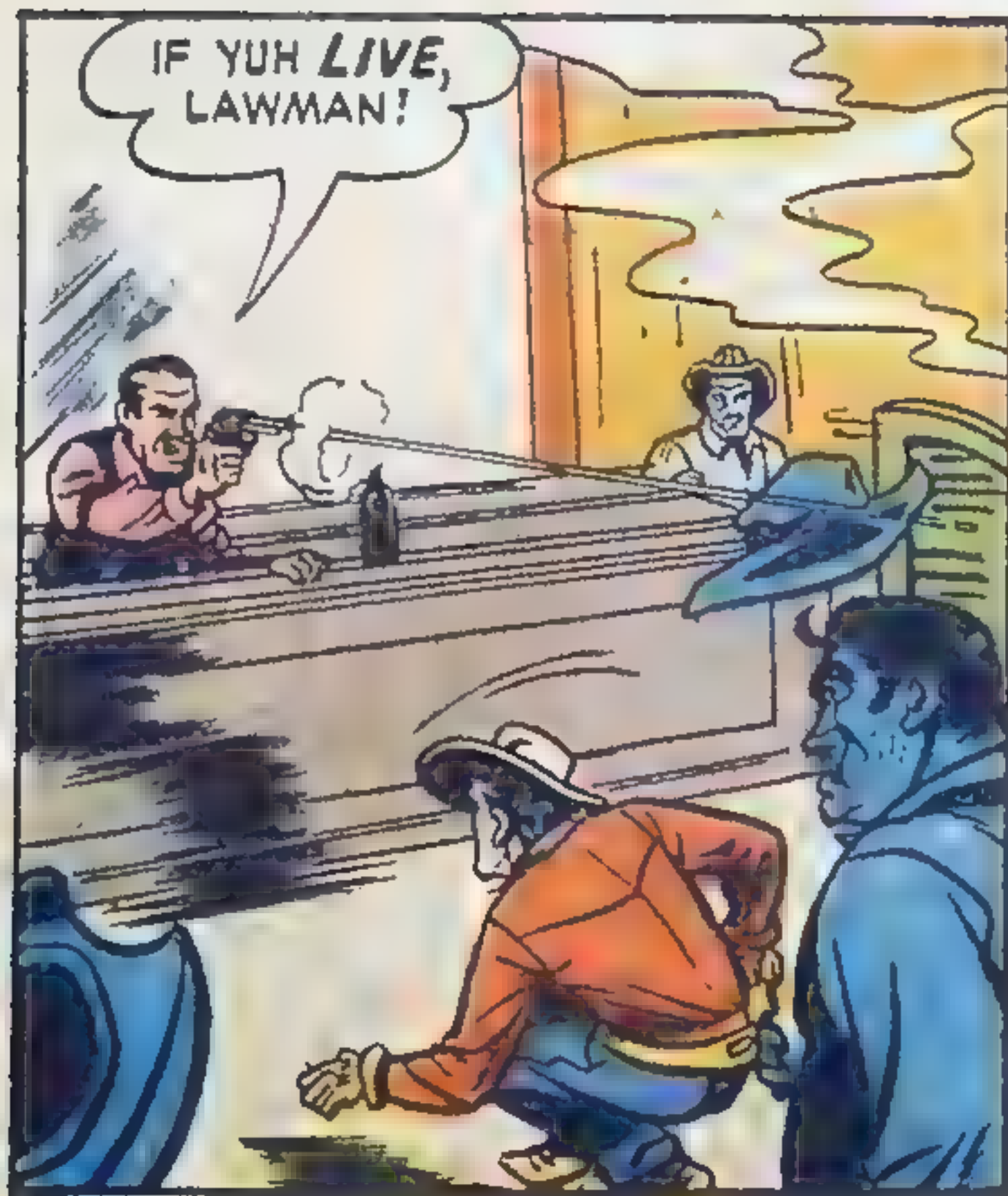
IN THERE, CHIEF!



THE JIG'S UP, DUTCH! THIS TIME FOR GOOD!



# THE DURANGO KID





# The DURANGO KID

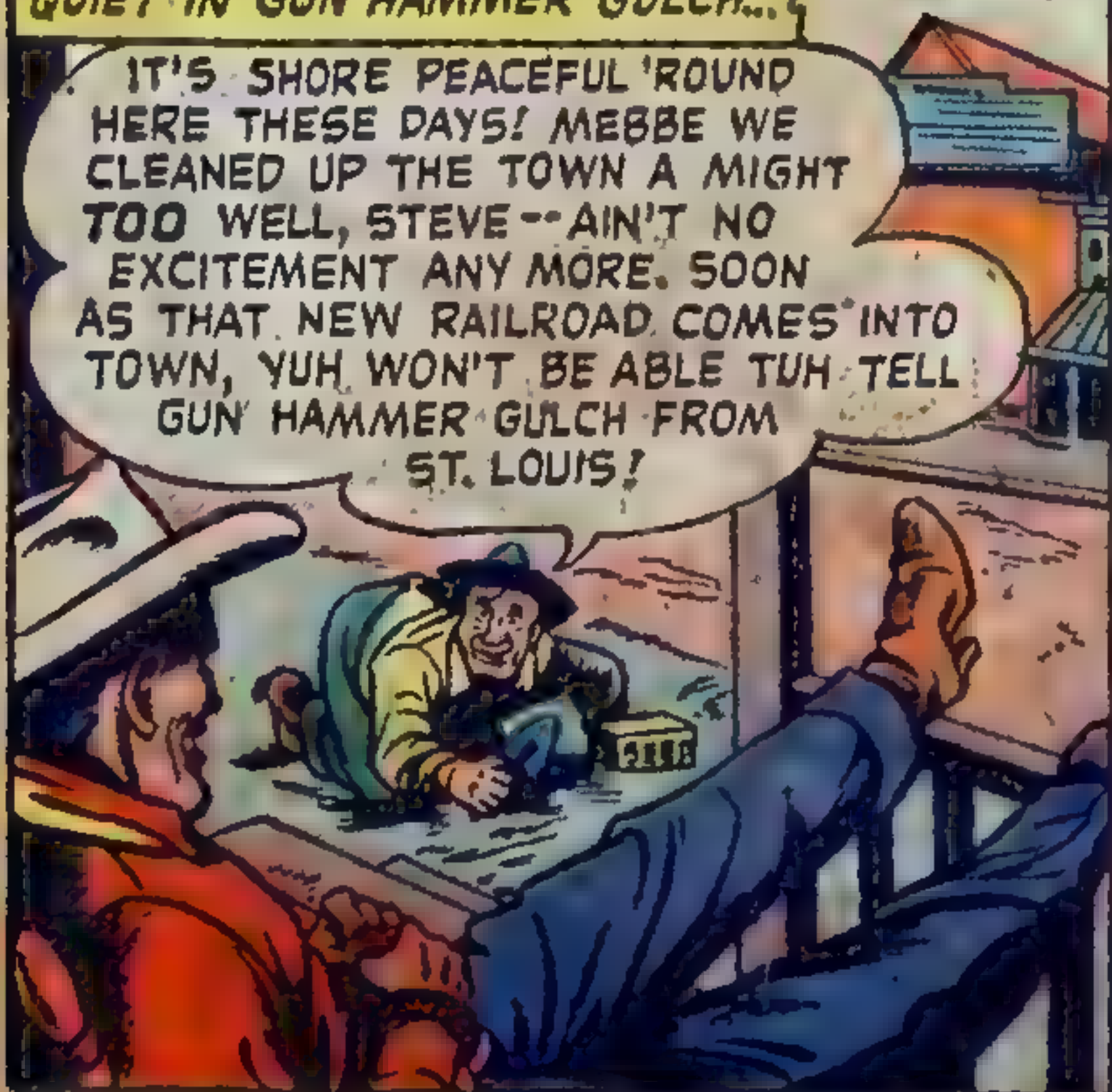
## IN REBEL GUNS

**B**RINGING CIVILIZATION TO THE WILD WEST WERE MEN FROM ALL OVER AMERICA. SOMETIMES, JAGGED TEMPER'S FLARED HIGH AS FLAMES AND THE WAR BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH WAS BATTLED ALL OVER AGAIN TO THE TUNE OF BLAZING SIX GUNS AND THUDDING FISTS. THERE WERE MEN LIKE JUD EVANS, WHO KEPT THESE HATREDS BURNING BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN PRIVATE AND EVIL INTERESTS. BUT THE DURANGO KID KNEW THAT THESE HATES HAD TO BE BURIED DEEP BEFORE THE GREAT WEST COULD BE BUILT--AND HE DOES PLENTY ABOUT IT IN THIS FAST-SHOOTING, HARD-FIGHTING EPISODE OF THE "REBEL GUNS!"



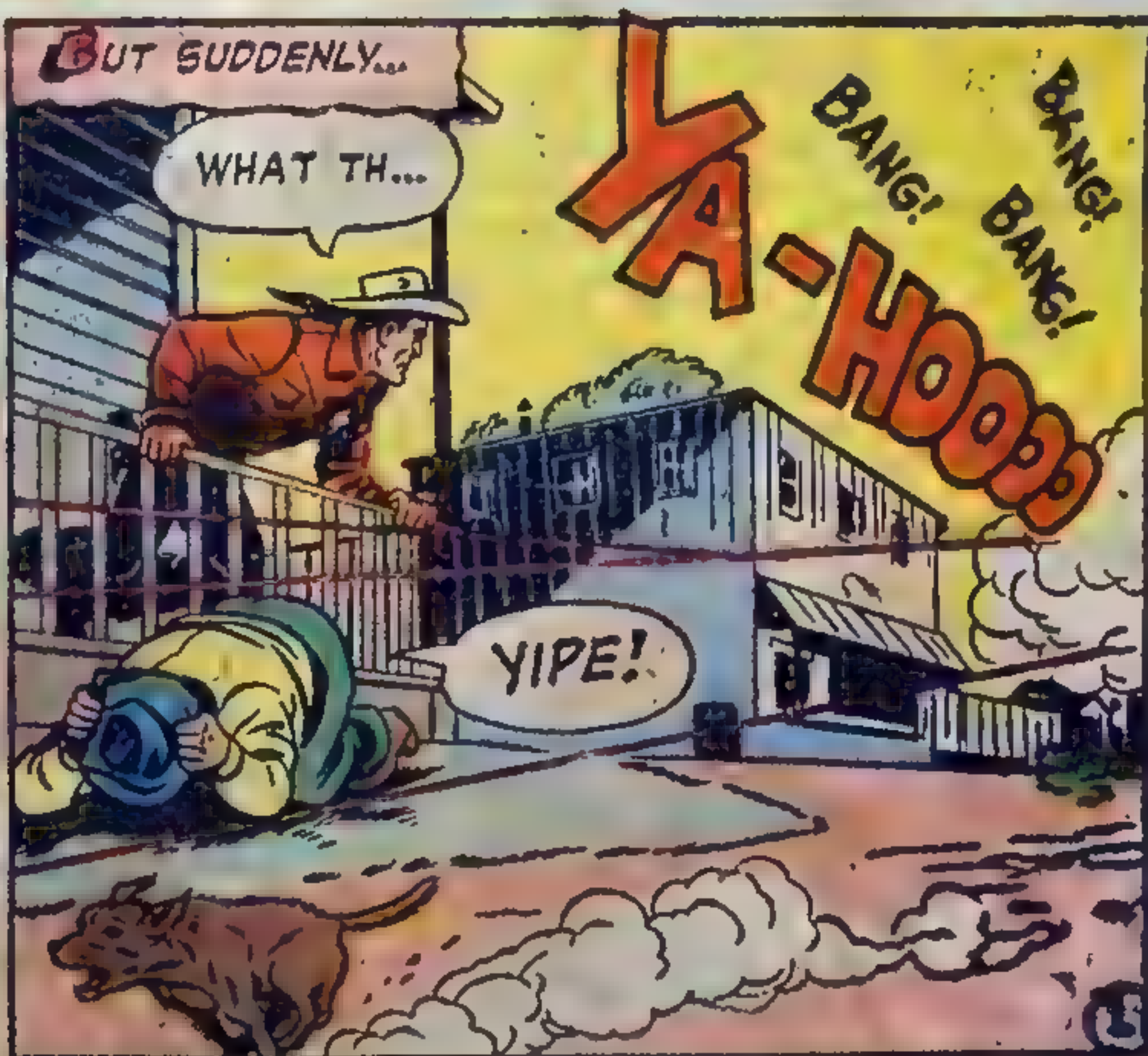
LATE ONE AFTERNOON--ALL QUIET IN GUN HAMMER GULCH...

IT'S SHORE PEACEFUL 'ROUND HERE THESE DAYS! MEBBE WE CLEANED UP THE TOWN A MIGHT TOO WELL, STEVE--AIN'T NO EXCITEMENT ANY MORE. SOON AS THAT NEW RAILROAD COMES INTO TOWN, YUH WON'T BE ABLE TUH TELL GUN HAMMER GULCH FROM ST. LOUIS!



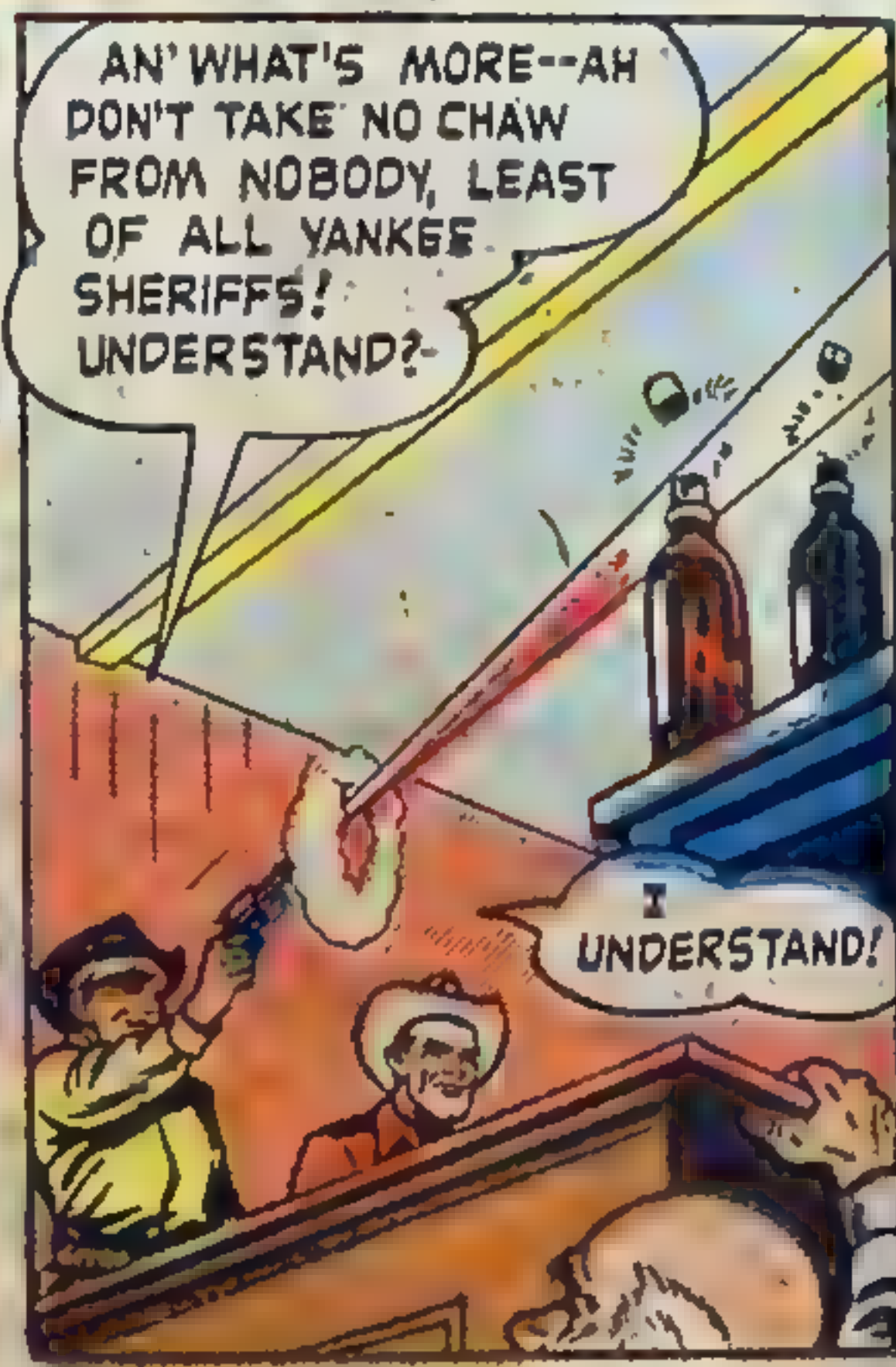
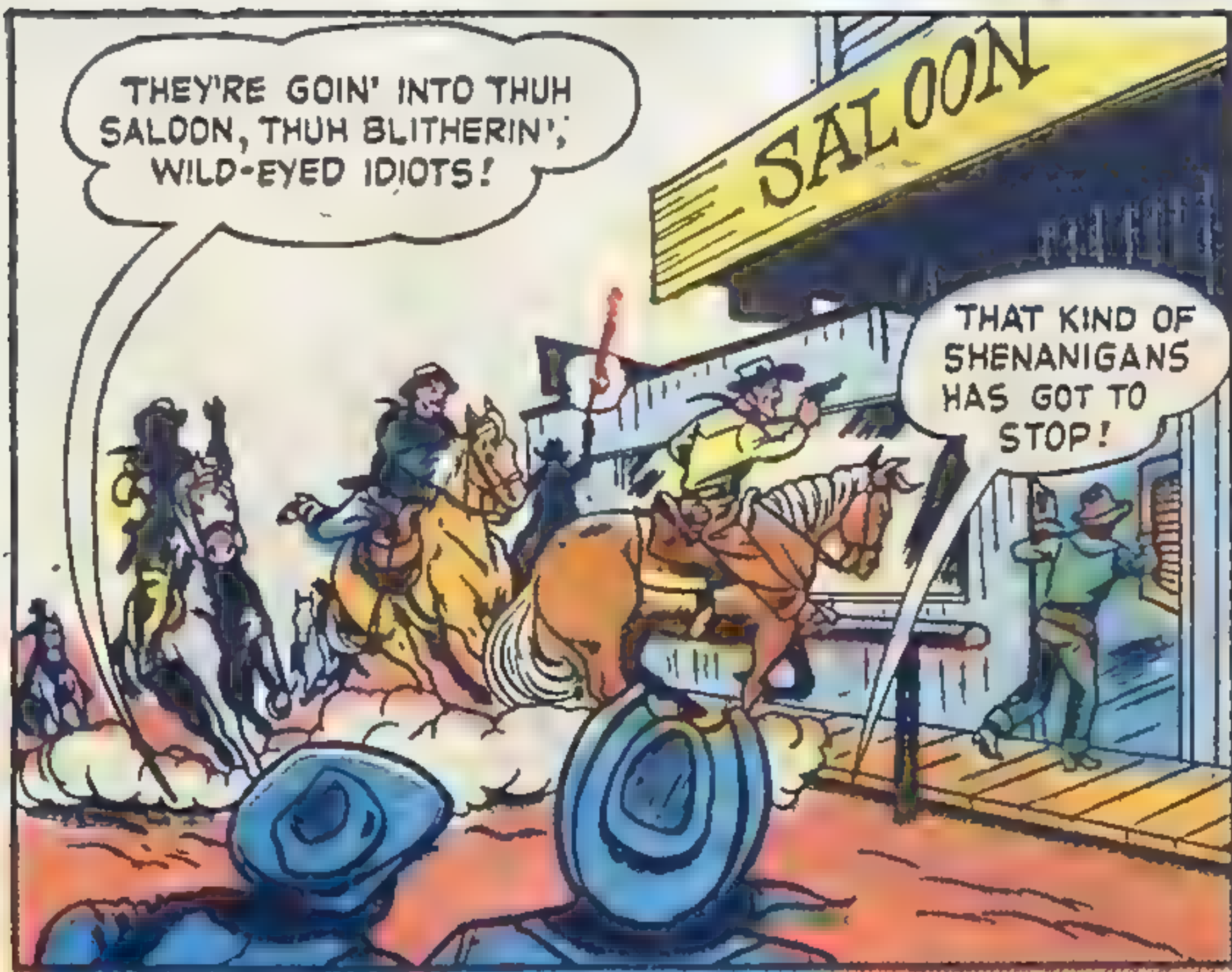
BUT SUDDENLY...

WHAT TH...



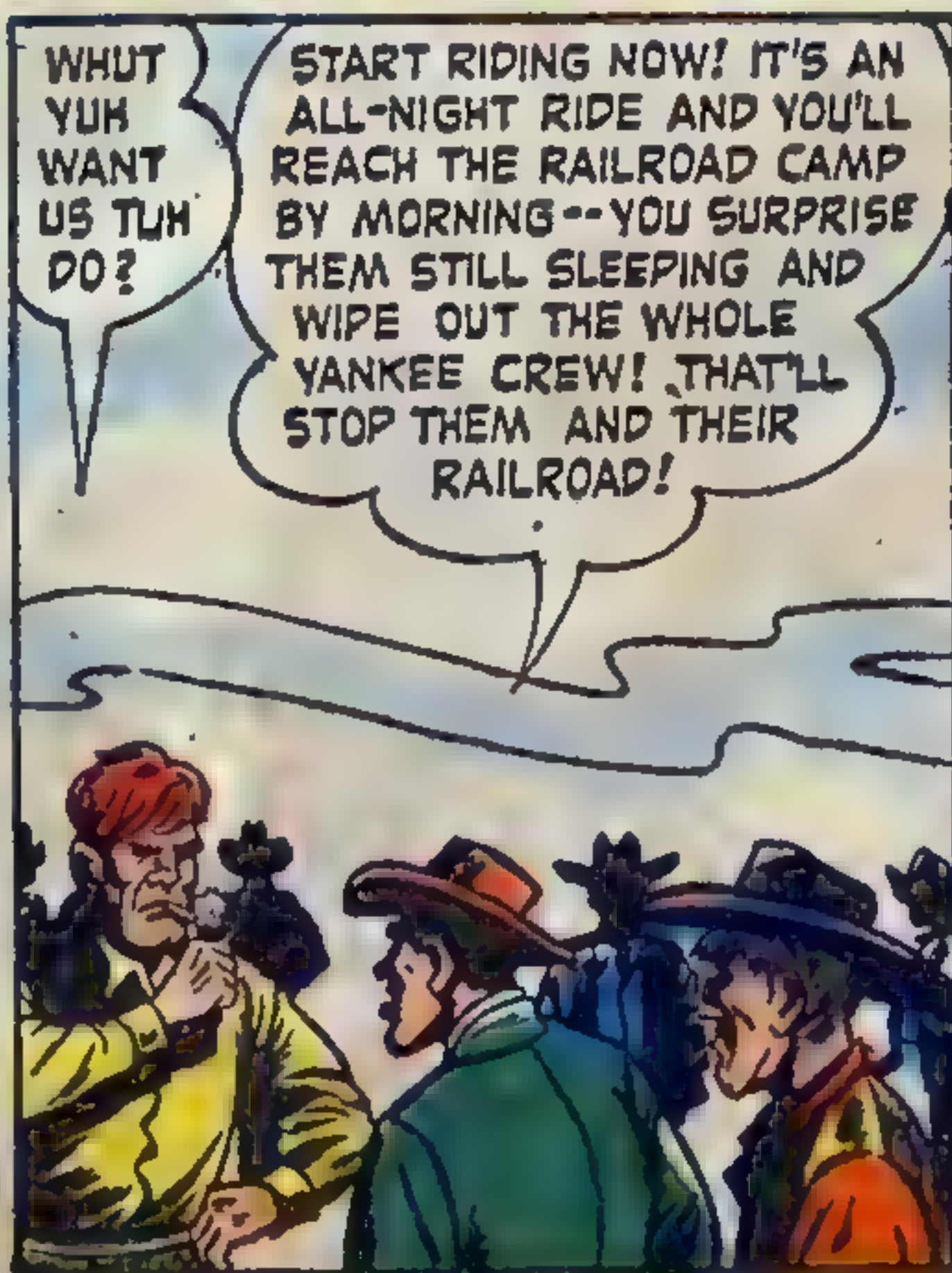
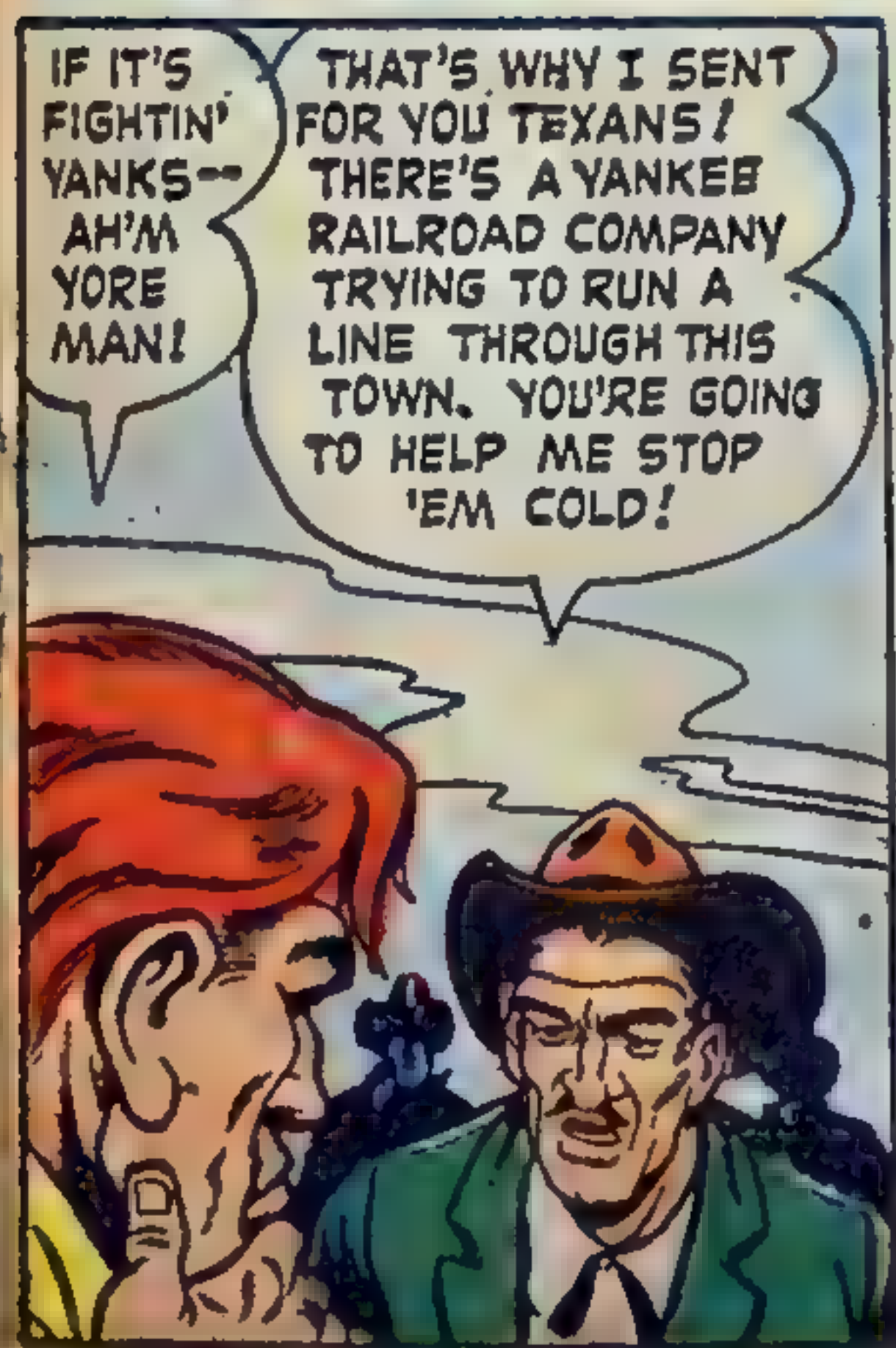


# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID





# THE DURANGO KID

NO--BY GUM! AH AIN'T CHICKEN!  
AH GOT A SCORE TUH SETTLE  
WITH THE YANKS AN'AH DON'T  
CARE HOW AH DO IT!  
COME ON!

HEH-HEH! THAT REBEL'S A FOOL! THE  
ONLY RESULT WILL BE TO SCARE THE  
RAILROAD OUT OF RUNNING THE LINE  
THROUGH THE TOWN. THEY'LL HAVE  
TO BY-PASS THROUGH MY LAND  
NORTH OF HERE AND THAT'LL  
COST 'EM PLENTY! I'LL MAKE  
A FORTUNE!

HOURS LATER...

HOLD IT, MEN--LET'S STOP  
HERE FOR A MINUTE  
AND I'LL GIVE YUH THE  
PLAN!

BUT WHAT RED LEGGER DOESN'T KNOW  
IS THAT BEHIND THE ROCKS IS THE  
HIDEOUT OF--- THE DURANGO KID!

LIKE JUD EVANS SAID-- WE HIT THUH YANK  
RAILROAD CAMP BY MORNIN' WHEN THEY'RE  
ALL ASLEEP. AH'LL CALL THUH SIGNAL FO'  
THUH CHARGE-- JUST LIKE WE DONE IN THUH  
WAR, THEN...

SO THAT'S JUD EVANS'  
GAME! I'VE GOT TO  
STOP 'EM!

RED LEGGER, YOU GOOD-FOR-NOTHING  
TEXAN-- I KNOW YOUR GAME AND  
I'M GOING TO STOP YOU!

GIT 'IM,  
MEN!  
AFTER 'IM!  
GIT THAT  
YANK!

GOOD! THEY'RE  
CHASING ME...!

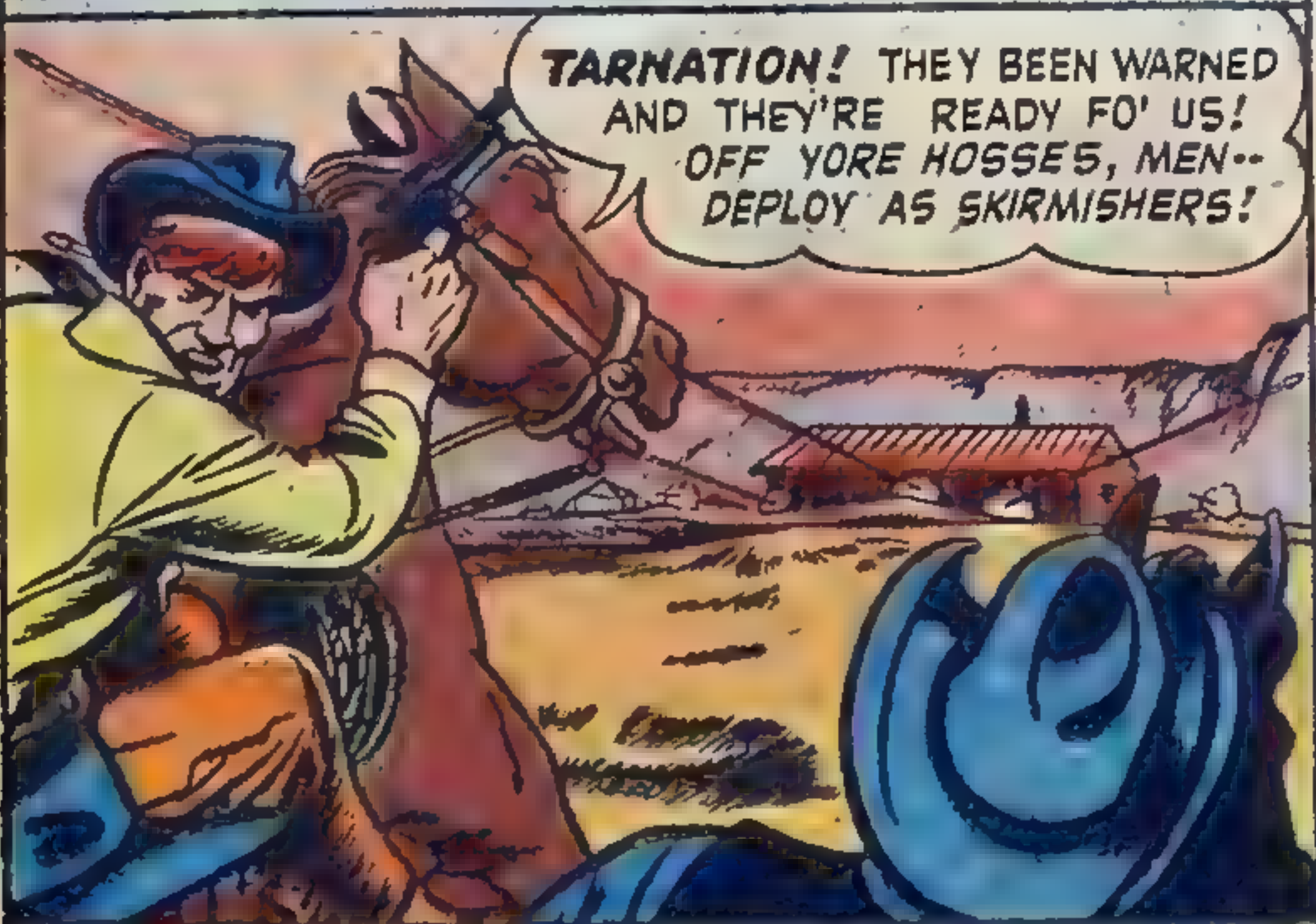


# THE DURANGO KID



IT'LL BE SOME TIME TILL RED FINDS OUT HE'S CHASING PRAIRIE DUST-- THAT'LL STALL HIM OFF

**M**ORNING! RED LEGGER AND HIS MEN, SEVERAL HOURS LATE AND MAD AS BLAZES AT HAVING BEEN TRICKED, ATTACK THE CAMP! THEY GET A WARM RECEPTION!



**T**HE RAILROAD WORKERS ARE WELL DUG IN...



I'M GOING TO STOP THIS NEEDLESS KILLING, SAM! WATCH FOR A SIGNAL TO CEASE FIRE!



NOT ME, YANK... AH'LL DIE FIGHTIN'!





# THE DURANGO KID

**B**UT THE DURANGO KID ROLLS QUICKLY TO DUCK THE SHOT...AND THAT SPLIT SECOND IS ENOUGH FOR A CAREFUL AIM...



...THAT'LL KILL YUH!  
...UGH!

NOT  
TRICKY ENOUGH,  
RED!

WHY  
DIDN'T  
YUH  
SHOOT  
TUH  
KILL?  
I  
SAW  
YUH  
AIM!

BECAUSE THERE'S  
BEEN ENOUGH KILLING  
AROUND HERE, RED!  
IT'S HIGH TIME  
SOMEBODY PUMPED  
SOME SENSE INTO  
THAT THICK SKULL  
OF YOURS!  
THE WAR'S OVER!

...AND IT'S TIME FOR NORTH  
AND SOUTH TO GET TOGETHER  
AND BUILD THIS COUNTRY--  
BUILD IT STRONG AND FREE,  
BURY ALL HATE. THIS RAIL-  
ROAD IS GOING TO BRING  
PROSPERITY TO  
NORTH AND  
SOUTH ALIKE!

GUESS  
AH BEEN A  
FOOL, YANK--  
THAT JUD  
EVANS TALKED  
ME INTO IT!  
AH'LL STOP  
THUH  
FIGHTIN'!

**R**ED GETS UP TO STOP THE  
FIGHTING... BUT!

MEN! HOLD YORE FIRE... UGH!

THAT  
WAS A  
RIFLE  
SHOT--  
AND IT  
CAME  
FROM  
THAT  
CLIFF!

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY  
DOWN FROM THAT  
CLIFF!

**A** FEW MINUTES LATER!

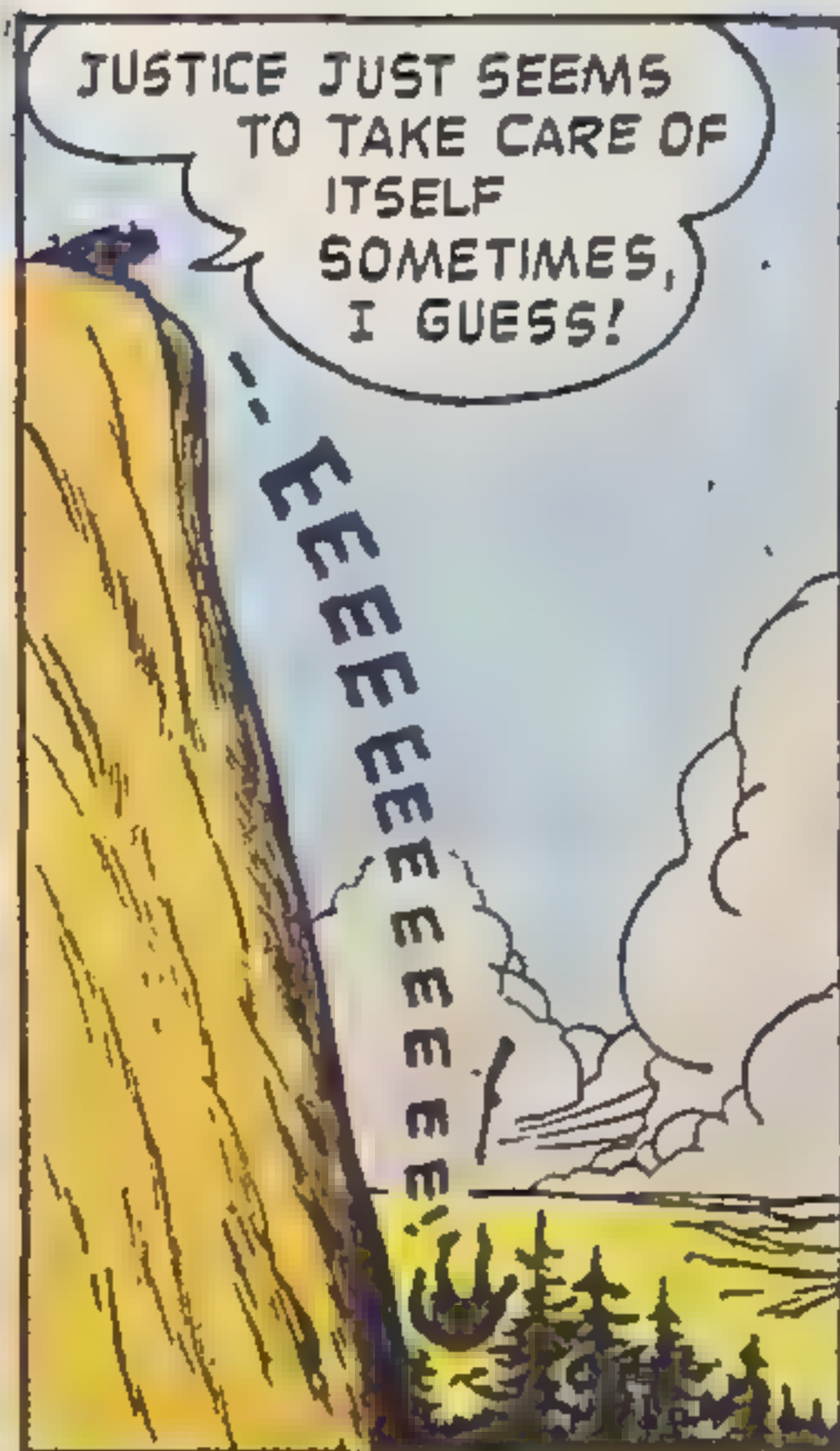
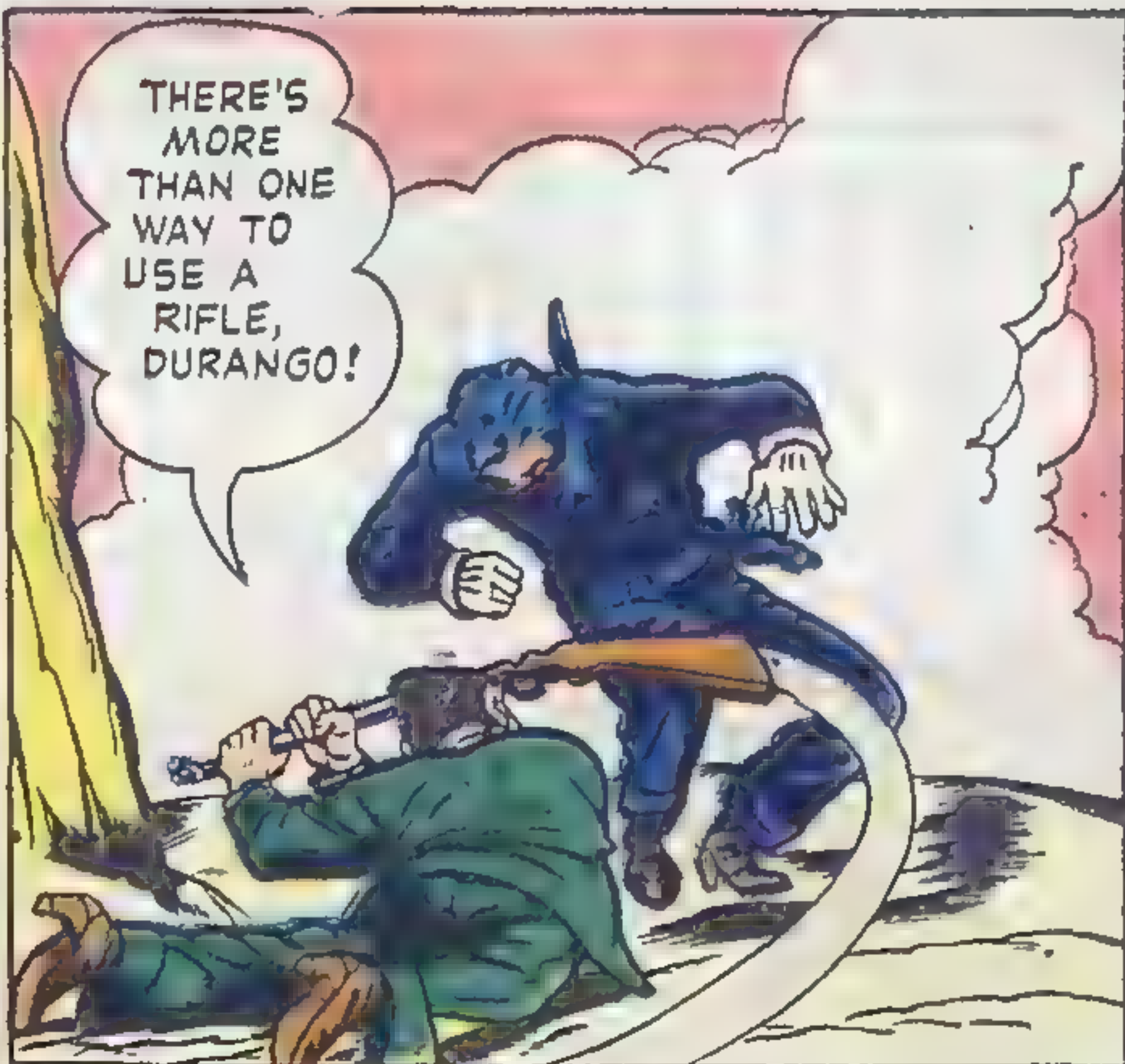
JUD EVANS! I THOUGHT  
SO! THERE'S GOING TO  
BE A RECKONING,  
EVANS!

TELL ME  
WHAT YOU  
SEE IN  
THIS MUZZLE,  
DURANGO!

I SEE A  
VERY BAD  
AIM, EVANS!



## THE DURANGO KID



A FEW DAYS LATER--THE TOWNSFOLK OF GUN HAMMER GULCH FIND A NOTE TACKED TO THE DOOR OF THE JAILHOUSE....

"TO THE FOLKS OF GUN HAMMER GULCH--  
YOU'VE BEEN VERY NICE AND WE  
SURE ENJOYED BEING SHERIFF FOR YOU.  
BUT I GUESS THE TOWN'S TOO TAME NOW,  
EVEN FOR US ---AND BESIDES, THERE'S  
WORK TO DO FARTHER WEST! MIGHT SUGGEST  
THAT RED LEGGER, NOW THAT HE'S GOT THE  
FOOLISHNESS KNOCKED OUT OF HIM,  
WOULD MAKE A REAL FINE SHERIFF  
SOON AS HE GETS OUT OF THE  
HOSPITAL.

GOOD LUCK AND GOODBYE,  
MULEY PIKE AND

Steve Brand

AND MILES AWAY BY THAT TIME, TRAILING THE  
SETTING SUN...

RIDIN' TRAIL, MOVIN' WEST, ♪  
UNDER THE WIDE, FREE SKY! ♪  
CAN'T SETTLE DOWN - NO TIME TO REST ♪  
GOTTA ROAM ON THE RANGE TILL I DIE!



**AND SO--STEVE BRAND AND HIS SIDEKICK, MULEY, THE RESTLESS URGE OF THE ROAMER IN THEIR BLOOD, TAKE OFF AGAIN ON THE ENDLESS TRAIL WESTWARD--ON TO FRESH ADVENTURES AND GREATER GLORY! WATCH FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE DURANGO KID FOR THE ACTION-PACKED THRILL-JAMMED PAGES OF THEIR EXPLOITS!**



# TRIGGER JUSTICE

EVERY night in Gunhammer Gulch, the owner of the Lost Hope saloon, "Boomer" Jack, big and warped and ugly as a wind-seared oak trunk, drooped behind the bar, sucked on a tooth, gimlet-eyed the population of his establishment and speculated on how he could wring yet another greenback from pockets already lean.

But on this one night, as well as on the preceding six, Boomer was not the only one searching the faces of men. There was another, and his name was Zeke Goss.

Goss, unlike the other saloon citizens, was a youngish man whose neck had not yet turned to crackled leather—and the bitter anger in his eyes was not kin to that in the eyes of the others in the Lost Hope. There was a reason for this difference, the reason being that Zeke had a purpose and the others had none.

On the seventh night, Boomer spoke to Goss. He leaned over the bar and put his chin in his hand. "Yuh expect it tuh be written all over thuh man's face?" he asked.

Goss said nothing. He was busy studying a newcomer, all alone in a corner, scowling over his drink. Goss was trying to see under the broad hat brim.

"Yuh're chasin' wind," Boomer continued. "Give it up; Goss—ain't no use. Thar ain't no evidence. How yuh goin tuh find out jest-standin' here starin'?"

The newcomer lifted his head. Goss's eyes crinkled, seemed to curl in at the edges. Then they softened, wavered, and at last moved on to study someone else. "I'll know," said Goss, "I'll just know thuh varmint when I see him!"

Boomer shrugged, turned, and went toward the other side of the counter, where a brawling, gravel-throated chorus demanded his services.

Shortly afterward, an excited little man entered the room, flapping the batwings noisily. He hurried to a game table and whispered into a friend's ragged ear. He and the friend then turned with a slow laconic amusement and regarded Goss a moment before they sent the word hissing into other waiting ears. Soon, a tide of silence rolled across the room in the wake of whispering and all heads turned to Goss. Boomer, sensitive to the moods of his place, stiffened then and sent inquiring looks across the bar. The little man hurried over to him and they leaned their heads together. A smile folded Boomer's face into unfamiliar creases. He even laughed aloud.

Then Boomer came over to Goss again and leaned across the counter.

"Whut'll yuh do when yuh git him?" he asked.

"Kill 'im!" said Goss.

"Wherever he is?"

"Wherever. Don't keer whar!"

"Even if yuh have tuh fight thuh law?"

Zeke turned. He looked into Boomer's eyes and his tongue moved up and down inside his cheek. But he did not answer otherwise.

"Whut I mean," continued Boomer, "—is thet thuh law might git him an' then let him go scot free fer want uv evidence or sumepin'. Thet new Sheriff, Steve Brand, is a queer one."

Goss shoved his nose just one inch from Boomer's. "Whut yuh tryin' tuh say, Boomer? I swear, if yuh're holdin' out on me —!"

Boomer grinned, then turned suddenly solemn. "I wish yuh luck, Goss. Thuh polecat deserves anything yuh got fer him—shootin' a man in thuh back!"

Goss gripped Boomer's collar with both hand and lifted him a few inches. His face turned a pasty white. He tried to speak but it stuck in his throat. "Boomer —" he finally managed to say, "Boomer —!"

The saloonkeeper wrung himself free and angrily clapped a hand on Goss's wrist. "Goss," he said, "thuh sheriff jist picked up Butch Joris an' put him in jail on suspicion uv killin' yer brother. I happen tuh know Joris wuz playin' a mean hand o' cards with yer brother thet night he got it."

Goss slumped. He looked down at his own hands, watched them curl in upon themselves involuntarily, like talons, and harden into fists. He looked up, met Boomer's mocking eyes a second, then turned and walked out of the saloon.

He walked down the middle of the moonlit street straight for the square of yellow light that marked the window of the sheriff's office. He kept his eyes on that blob of light and he kept his hands stiff, unswinging, pressed against the cool gun butts, all the way.

He clumped up the steps, kicked open the door and stepped inside. Sheriff Steve Brand, sitting alone at the table, looked up.

"I want Butch Joris," Goss said.

Steve Brand leaned back in his chair. "I appreciate your feelings, Goss," he said, "but this is an affair for the law. There isn't going to be any more 'trigger justice' around here."

"I want Joris!"

"No," Brand said softly.

Goss pulled his gun. But somehow, between the time it cleared leather and was aimed, many other things happened at once. Brand, spraddle-legged over his chair, suddenly stood, whipped the chair between his legs and catapulted it at Goss. It hit Goss's gun and the fouled shot snuffed out the kerosene lamp on the table. Simultaneously, Goss felt his legs sail out from



# THE DURANGO KID

under as Brand, diving, hit them hard.

Then a digging jolt in his stomach pumped all the air out of him and caused little whirling circles of light to float through the black room. That was all he knew for a while.

When he came to, the lamp was on again and Brand sat in his chair as though he'd never moved, playing with a gun that lay on the table.

"Somehow, sometime," Goss said. "I'm comin' back an' kill that varmint. I'll git thuh polecat muhself an' I won't shoot 'im in thuh back like he done muh brother."

Sheriff Brand leaned over Goss. Intently he said, "Goss, Joris was here playing checkers with me all that night your brother was murdered!"

"That's right, Goss," came Joris' voice hollowly from the cell beyond.

Zeke got up from the floor and took another chair beside the table, trying very hard to ignore the six-gun lying a few inches from his elbow. "Whut kind uv game yuh playin' with me," he asked. "Why'n thunder did yuh jail him?"

Brand got up and paced the floor. "I figured if I made an arrest, the real killer would get careless and give me a clue, because right now there's nothing at all to go on. Joris agreed to let me experiment with him."

Brand stopped in front of Zeke. "Goss," he said, "Muley Pike and I were the ones who found your brother's body just outside of town. We brought it right here. When you heard about it you came thundering in, took one look at your brother's face and then went storming out, yelling for blood. All you saw of your brother was his face, because the rest of him was wrapped in a coat. It was Muley and I who put him in a box and buried him. Nobody helped us, not even you."

Goss looked at his feet.

"All right," said Goss, "I was crazy, crazy fer blood. Couldn't think uv nothin else. Mebbe I shoulda helped."

"That's not it," said Brand. "Listen, Goss—how did you know your brother was shot *in the back*?"

Goss stared.

"Nobody knew that, Goss, except me, Muley—and whoever killed your brother. Now, how did you find out?"

They both heard the rustling sound at the window at the same time. They clattered across the floor, scooping up their guns on the way, and went out the door, shoulder to shoulder. Goss saw a dark figure disappear around a corner and he fired. A drumming of running feet testified that he'd missed. He rounded the corner just a step ahead of Brand and then he stopped. The street lay empty. "Got away," said Brand and looked hard at Goss.

Goss holstered his gun. "Must've been some buttons foolin' around," he said, knowing who it was. He knew who it was with a great joy and a great hatred.

"Are you going to tell me how you know your brother was shot in the back?" asked Brand.

"Nope."

"I'll find out one way or the other," said the sheriff.

"Good luck," Goss said and he started off down the street. He heard the sheriff turn away behind him. Good! This was his party and no one would take it from him. Inside his head he could hear Boomer saying

again, "*Thuh polecat deserves anything yuh got fer him—shootin' a man in thuh back!*"

Goss stood outside the swinging doors and looked inside the Lost Hope Saloon. Boomer was not there. A helper was tending bar. Goss turned and went down the street toward Boomer's shack.

He flattened with the shadows, listened carefully at each corner. He circled Boomer's house, which was dark. A clump of trees to one side afforded cover and yet gave visibility to both doors of the house. Behind the trees was a warehouse. He crawled along a shadowed ditch an inch at a time. When he got to the trees, he leaned against one of them, breathing hard, cradling his gun, watching Boomer's house. Sometime Boomer would go into that house—or come out.

Then I'll git him, he thought—I'll git him even ef I have tuh shoot him in thuh back like he done muh brother!

The back! Goss thought again and it was at this point that the goose-pimples prickled up his own back and it seemed that two hot dots burned into his spine. He tried to turn fast, but even while he turned he knew what was going to happen. Even before he could lift his six-shooter, the gunblast from the warehouse blinded him and the searing .45 slug crashed into him like the kick of a mule.

He tried to squirm around in order to bring his other hand to bear, but he couldn't move. Something was wrong with his side, which seemed to be melting away in heat. Then, through a gap in the trees, he saw Boomer hunkering for him. He tried to move again, but couldn't.

He saw Boomer stop, very close. He heard Boomer laugh. He saw Boomer lift the gun. The moonlight gleamed along the edge of the muzzle mouth and the black hole seemed very large.

And then a great weariness swept over him and he was almost glad it was all going to be over. He closed his eyes.

The gunblast shattered his ears and left them numbly ringing. There was a weight on his feet and he thought this weight was death, that it would move up slowly. With a great relief and thankfulness he thought, *so it's like this—not so bad!*

Then he heard the crashing in the bushes and in surprise he opened his eyes, amazed that he could do that. The first thing he saw was Boomer, lying dead across his feet. Then he saw Steve Brand, a thin whisper of smoke lazying out of his gun barrel, standing there.

Brand grinned. "Sorry I had to use you as bait this way, Goss. I was almost too late!"

Goss closed his eyes again tightly against the pain. Brand's fingers probed his shoulder. "It's all right," he heard Brand say, "your shoulder's busted up a bit, but it can be mended. What do you say, Goss—disappointed that I got him instead of you?"

Goss opened his eyes. He looked up into Brand's face, saw the iron-grey crinkling eyes that were merry and friendly and yet could harden suddenly to smokey steel. He liked what he saw. And he laughed then. He didn't know why, but he laughed—and it was the first time in a long, long while that he had laughed.

"Naw," Goss said, "I ain't disappointed. Thuh law's bullet is as good as mine, I reckon—mebbe a whole lot better . . ."

THE END



# Dan Brand and Tipi

**W**AY BACK, WHEN OUR COUNTRY WAS YOUNG, THE WEST WAS STILL EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI AND THE TRULY GREAT AMERICANS WERE THE INTREPID PIONEERS OF THE BACKWOODS OF NEW YORK, PENNSYLVANIA AND OHIO—WHERE THE WOODS WERE THICK AND SOWN WITH SUDDEN DEATH... THE GREATEST OF THE BACKWOODSMEN WAS **DAN BRAND**—ANCESTOR OF STEVE BRAND—AND HIS LITTLE INDIAN FRIEND, **TIPi**, WHO BLAZED NEW TRAILS OF ADVENTURE FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW, PUSHING CIVILIZATION AND JUSTICE ACROSS THE CONTINENT OF THE "NEW" WORLD! HERE WAS WHITE AMERICAN AND BROWN AMERICAN FIGHTING COMMON DEADLY ENEMIES SIDE BY SIDE!



OF COURSE DAN BRAND WASN'T ALWAYS A PIONEER. NO, THERE WAS A TIME...

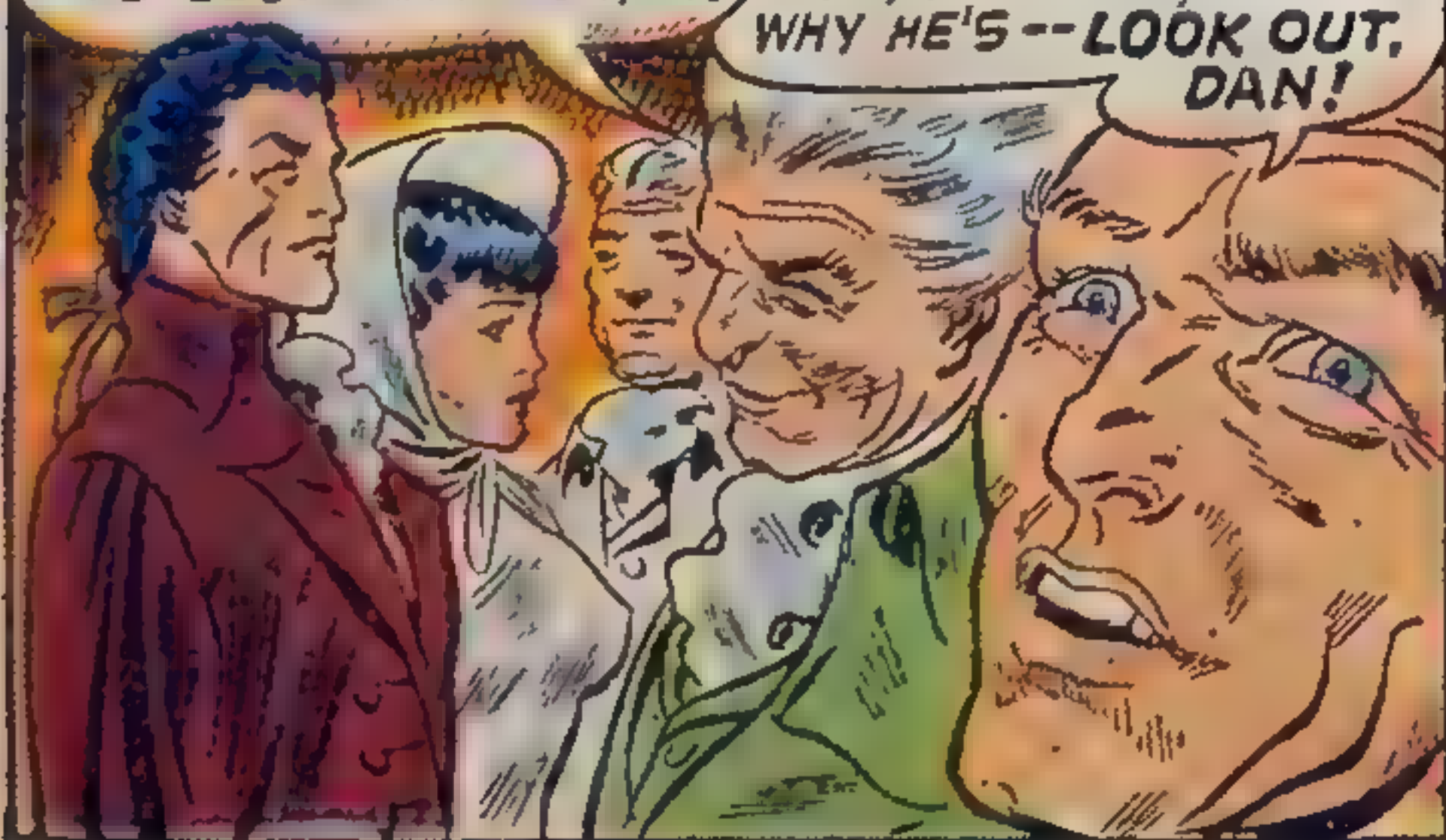
...IN 1770! ALL PHILADELPHIA SOCIETY TURNS OUT FOR THE WEDDING OF WEALTHY YOUNG DAN BRAND AND HIS SWEETHEART, LUCY WHARTON.

A FINE MATCH—TWO OF THE PROUDEST NAMES IN THE COLONIES! I GUESS THE BEST MAN WON, EH?

RIGHT! BUT I'M SURE THE OTHER MAN, PETER BRADFORD, DOESN'T THINK SO... SAY, THERE'S BRADFORD NOW, ON THAT BALCONY! WHY HE'S -- LOOK OUT, DAN!

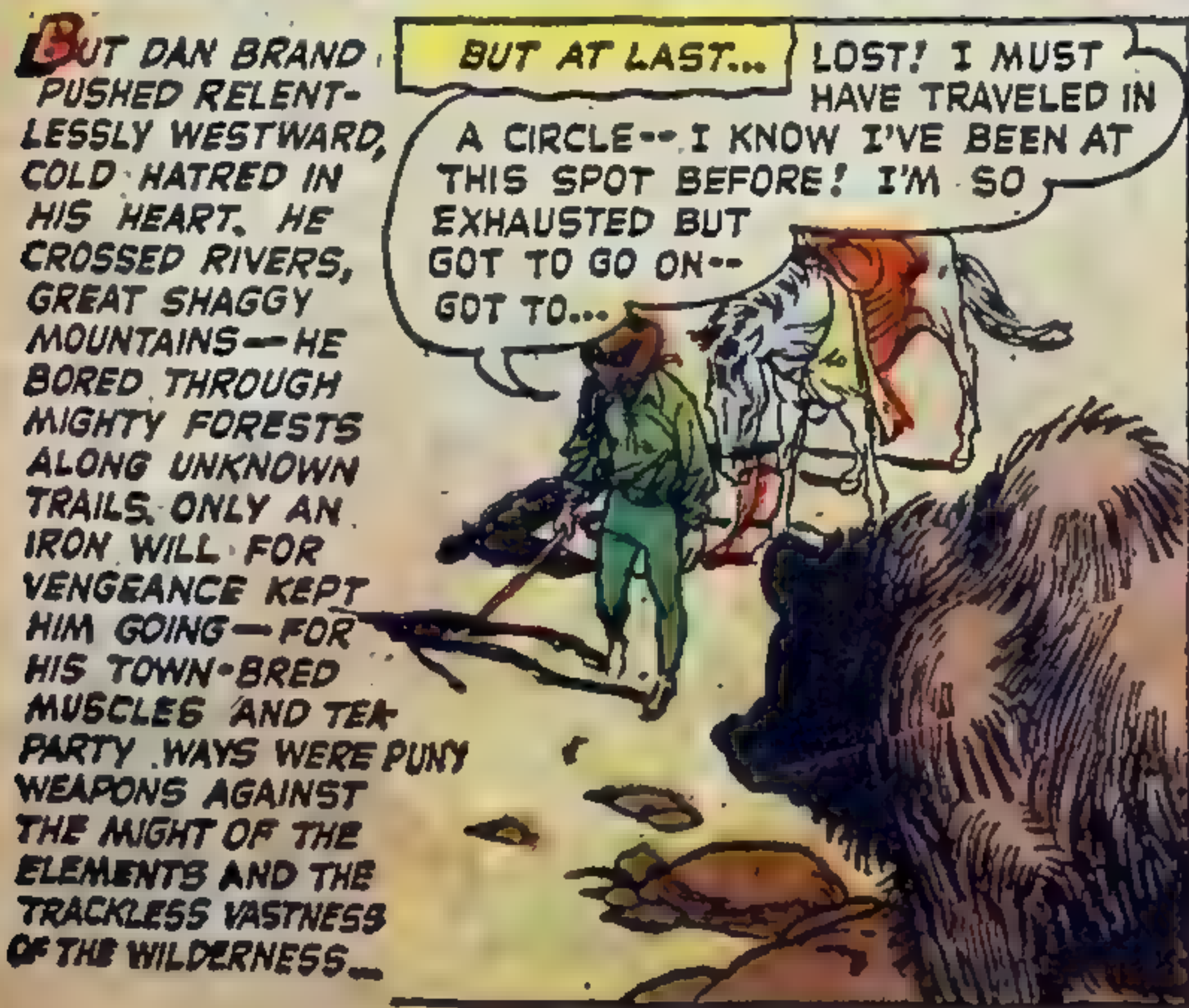
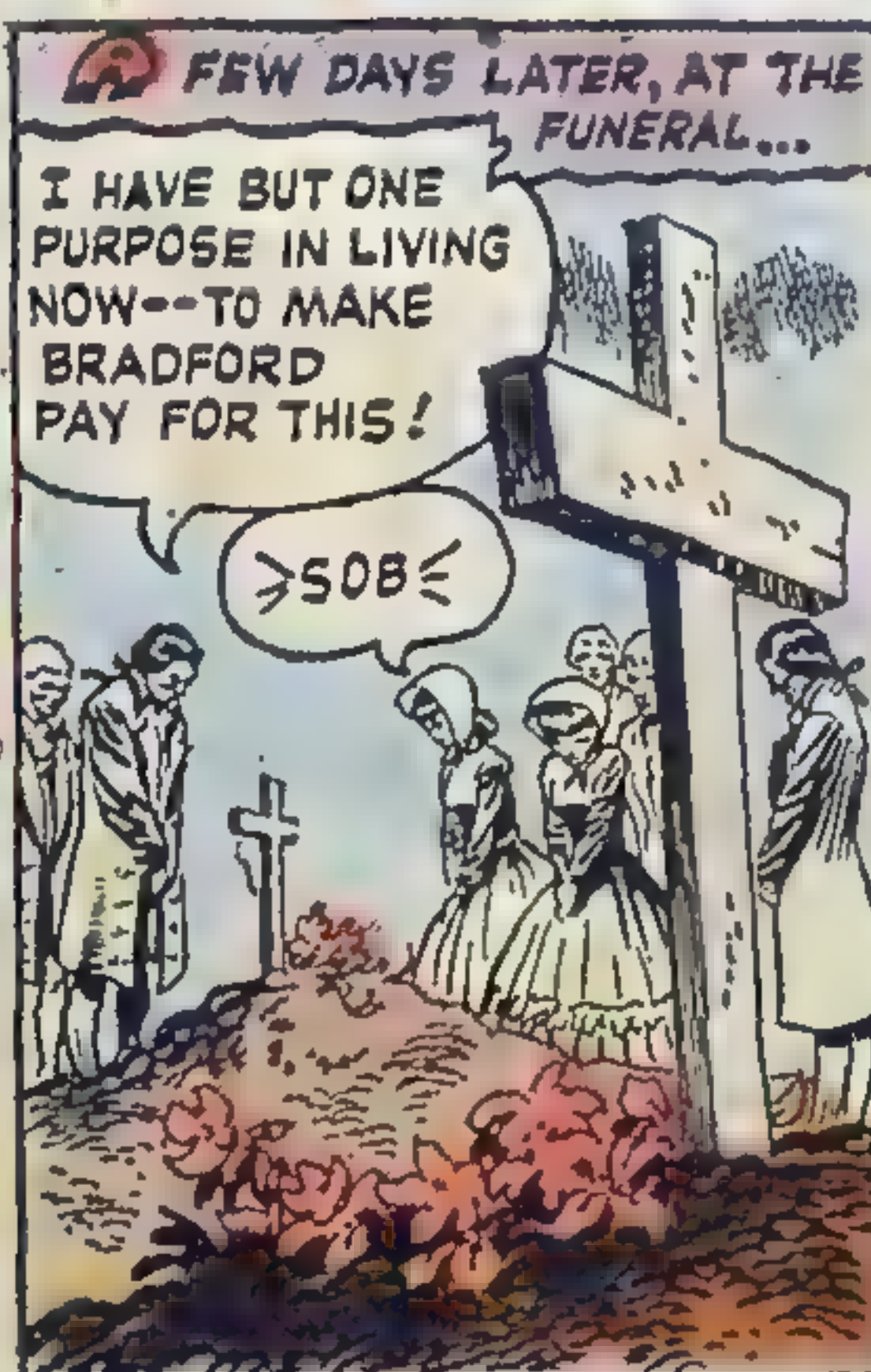
IF I CAN'T HAVE HER, NO ONE ELSE WILL! I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, DAN BRAND!

PUT THAT PISTOL AWAY, BRADFORD!





# THE DURANGO KID

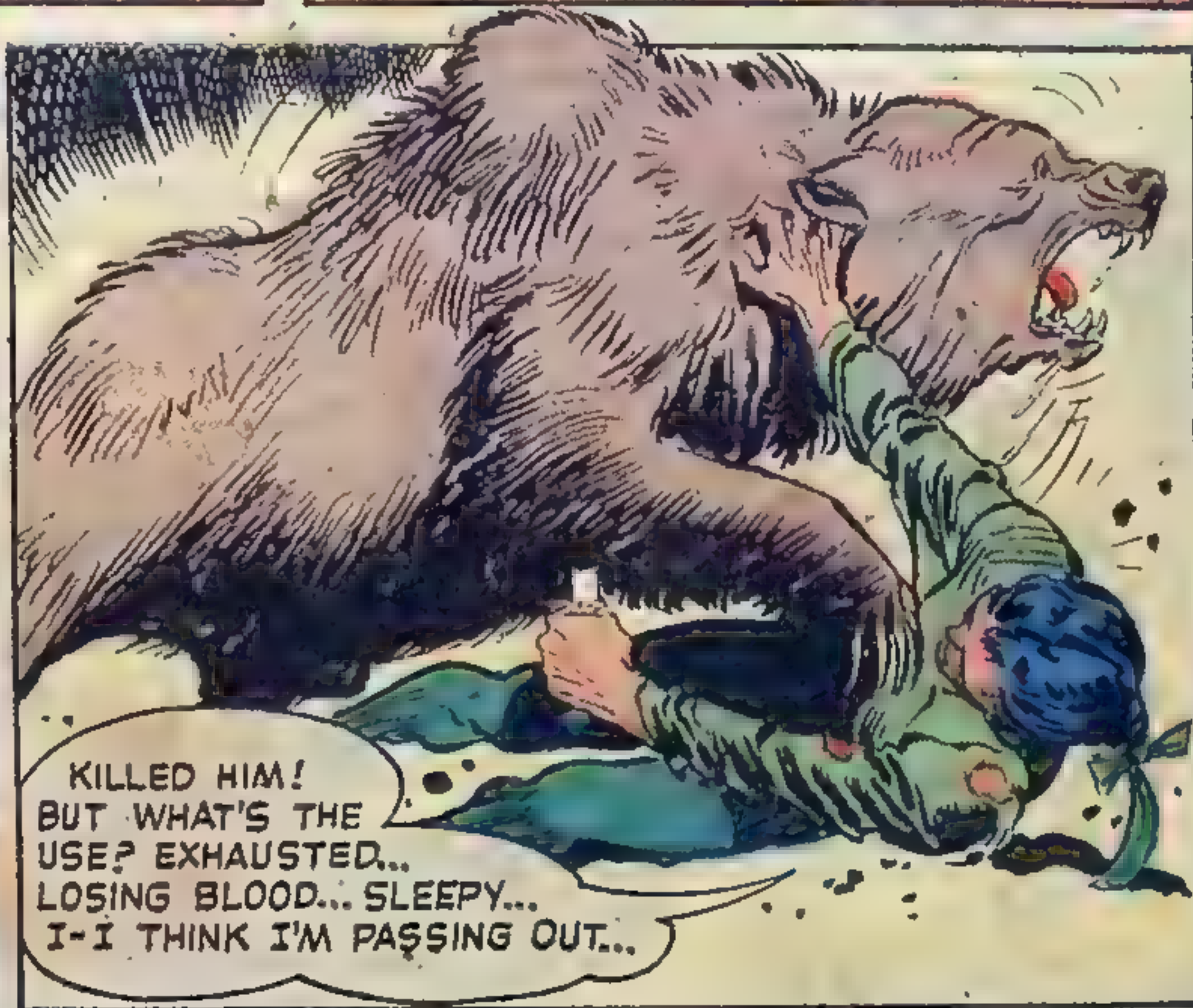




# THE DURANGO KID



DAN DUCKS THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE ENRAGED BEAST OF THE FOREST, BUT A SLASHING BLOW FROM THE SLEDGEHAMMER PAW...



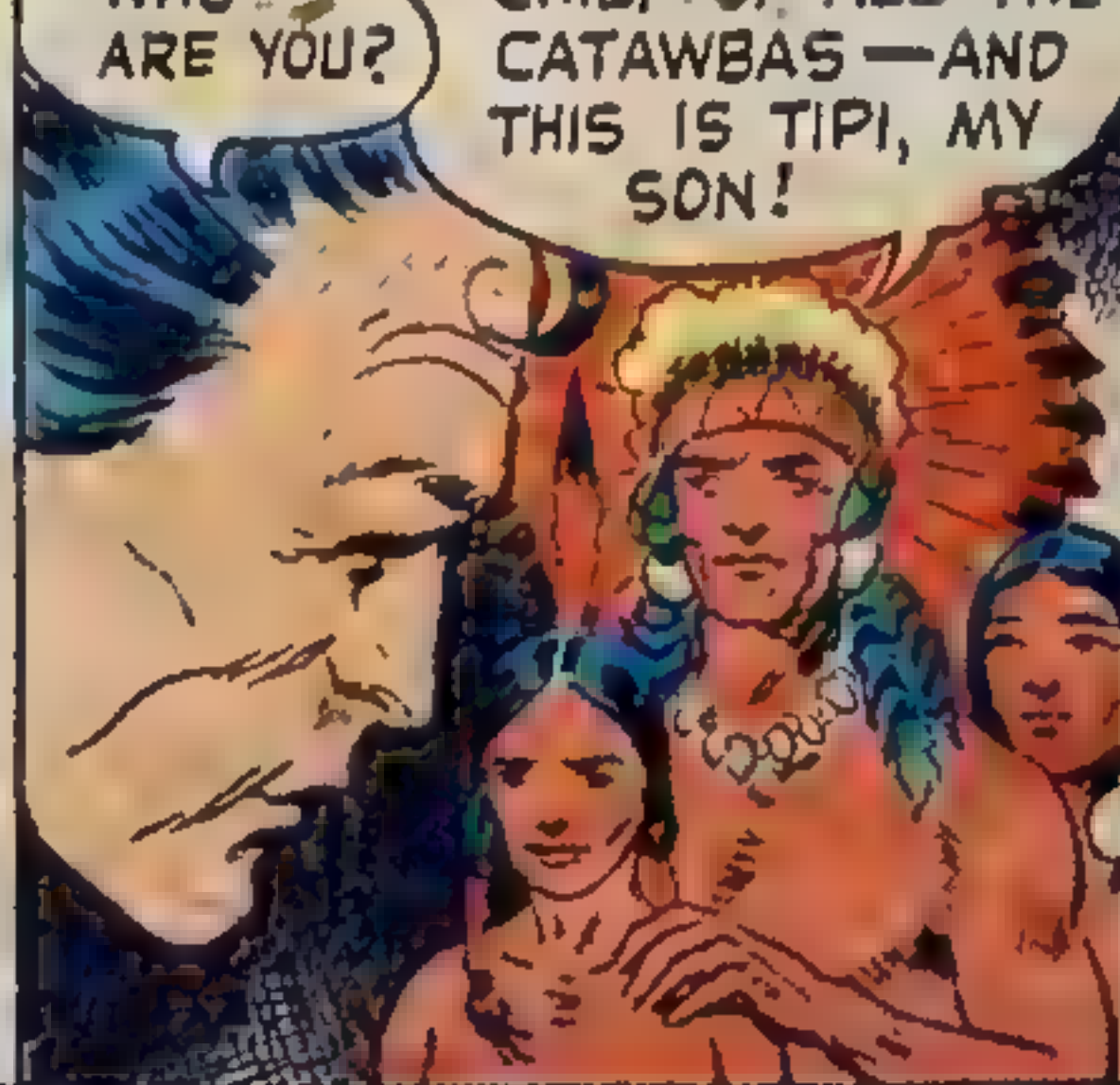
THE PRIMEVAL WILDERNESS, BROODING BLINDLY OVER LIFE AND DEATH AND VIOLENCE, CLAIMS ITS OWN! OMINOUS SILENCE GRIPS THE FOREST ONCE AGAIN AND DARKNESS DRAWS A VEIL OVER DAN BRAND, PLUNGING HIM INTO A HALF-SLEEP, HALF-DEATH. MINUTES, HOURS, DAYS—THEY'RE ALL THE SAME IN THAT BLACK, BLIND PIT FROM WHICH SO FEW RETURN...

UN  
TIL  
WHAT—  
WHERE—  
WHERE  
AM I?  
HOW DID  
I GET  
HERE?  
WHO  
ARE YOU?

WE FOUND YOU  
ALMOST DEAD IN  
THE WOODS TWO  
DAYS AGO AND WE  
BROUGHT YOU  
TO OUR VILLAGE. I  
AM GREAT DEER,  
CHIEF OF ALL THE  
CATAWBAS—AND  
THIS IS TIPI, MY  
SON!

THANK YOU, THEN,  
CHIEF GREAT DEER,  
FOR SAVING MY  
LIFE. BUT I MUST  
GO! I HAVE A  
MISSION OF VENGEANCE  
THAT CANNOT WAIT, I-I...

CAREFUL!  
YOU ARE  
STILL TOO  
WEAK, MY  
BOY!  
CATCH  
HIM,  
TIPI!





# THE DURANGO KID



I HONOR YOUR MISSION OF VENGEANCE, MY SON. BUT HERE IS AN OLD MAN'S ADVICE—STAY WITH US AWHILE AND RECOVER YOUR HEALTH. WE WILL TEACH YOU THE WAYS OF THE FOREST, THE INDIAN LORE...



...AND THEN YOU WILL CONQUER BOTH THE WILDERNESS AND YOUR ENEMY. THE STRONG OF HEART DO NOT THROW THEMSELVES FOOLISHLY INTO DANGER, BUT PREPARE THEMSELVES! LET US TEACH YOU CUNNING AND GIVE YOU STRENGTH!

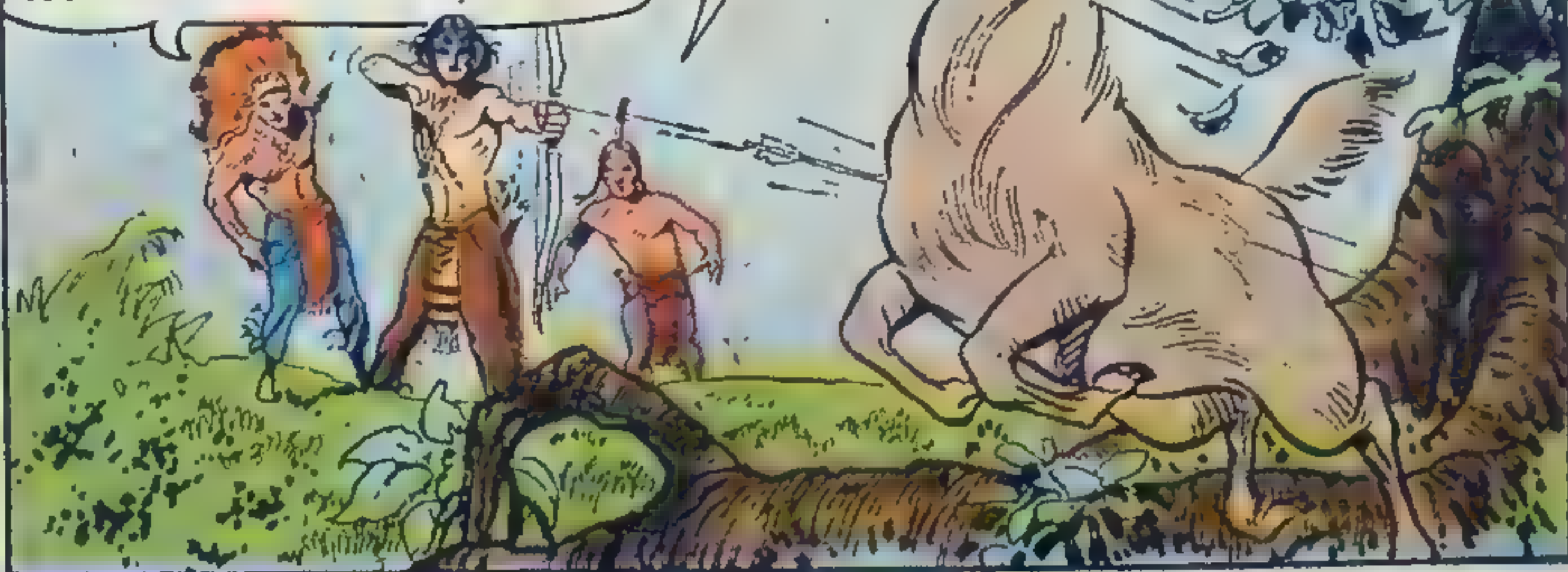


YOU SPEAK WISE WORDS, GREAT DEER. I WILL STAY! AND I WILL LEARN ALL YOU CAN TEACH, SO THAT I CAN OVERCOME MY ENEMY!

**WEEKS PASSED BY...**

A FINE SHOT! YOU PICKED UP HIS TRAIL WITH CLEVERNESS AND YOU KEPT HIM BETWEEN THE WIND AND YOU, SO HE WOULD NOT PICK UP YOUR MAN SMELL! YOU ARE A GOOD PUPIL, MY BOY!

YOU'LL STAY WITH US, WON'T YOU, DAN BRAND—AND BE MY BROTHER?



AND THE WEEKS ROLLED INTO MONTHS—RIGOROUS MONTHS THAT TEMPERED DAN'S MUSCLES TO STEEL...

QUICKLY, DAN—NOW—WHILE HE IS TURNING! LESS MUSCLE AND MORE SKILL, MY SON! AH, THAT'S IT! GOOD!

I GIVE, DAN BRAND—THE MATCH IS YOURS. BY THE SPIRIT OF MY ANCESTORS, YOU ARE GETTING TOO GOOD FOR ME!



A SOLID YEAR PASSED, UNTIL...

MY MISSION IS STILL UNFULFILLED, GREAT DEER—SO NOW I MUST GO. I LOOK ON YOU AS A FATHER, MY NOBLE TEACHER.

MY HEART IS PAINED AT YOUR LEAVING—HAH, WHAT IS THIS?

GREAT DEER! GREAT DEER!



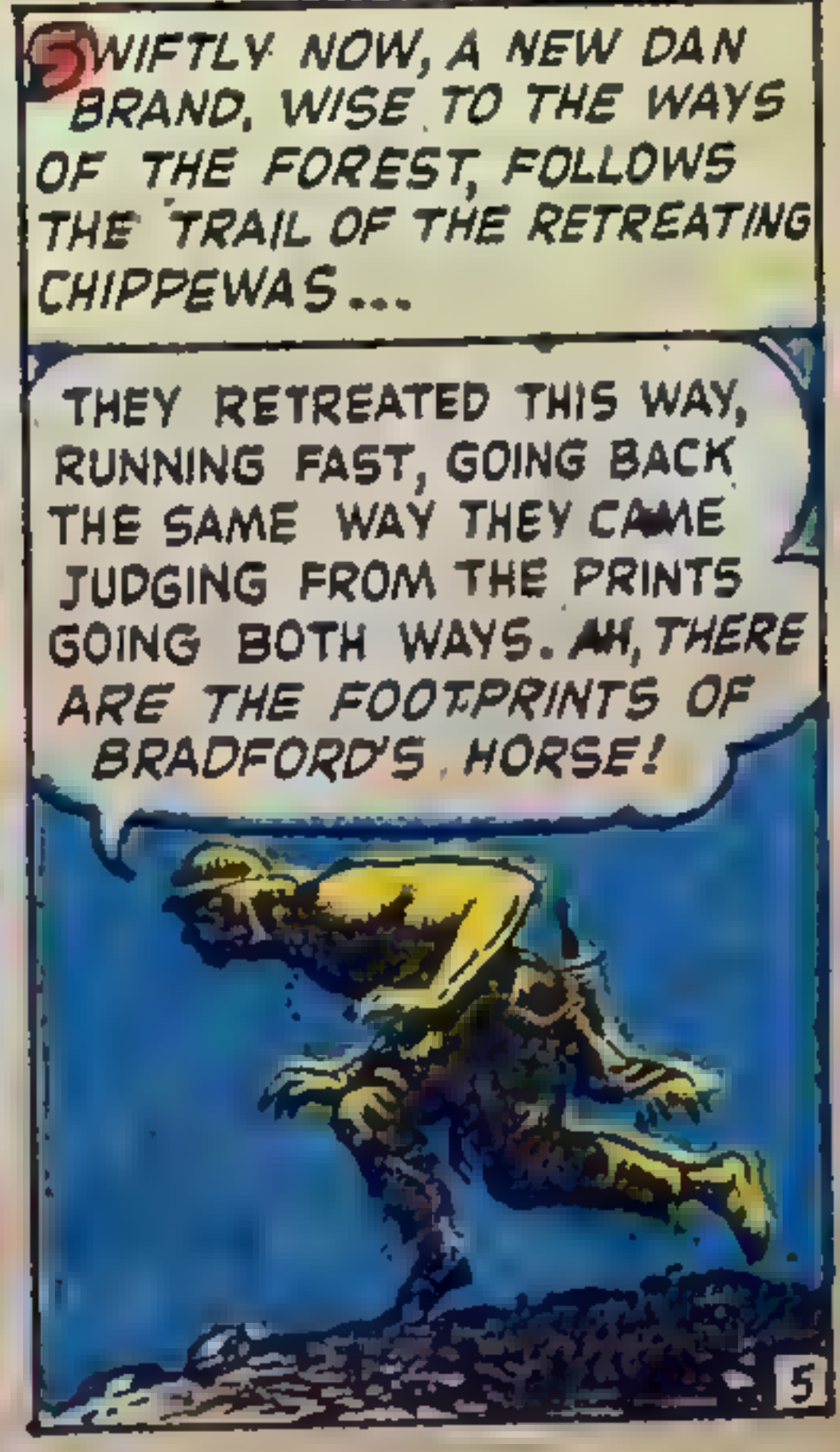
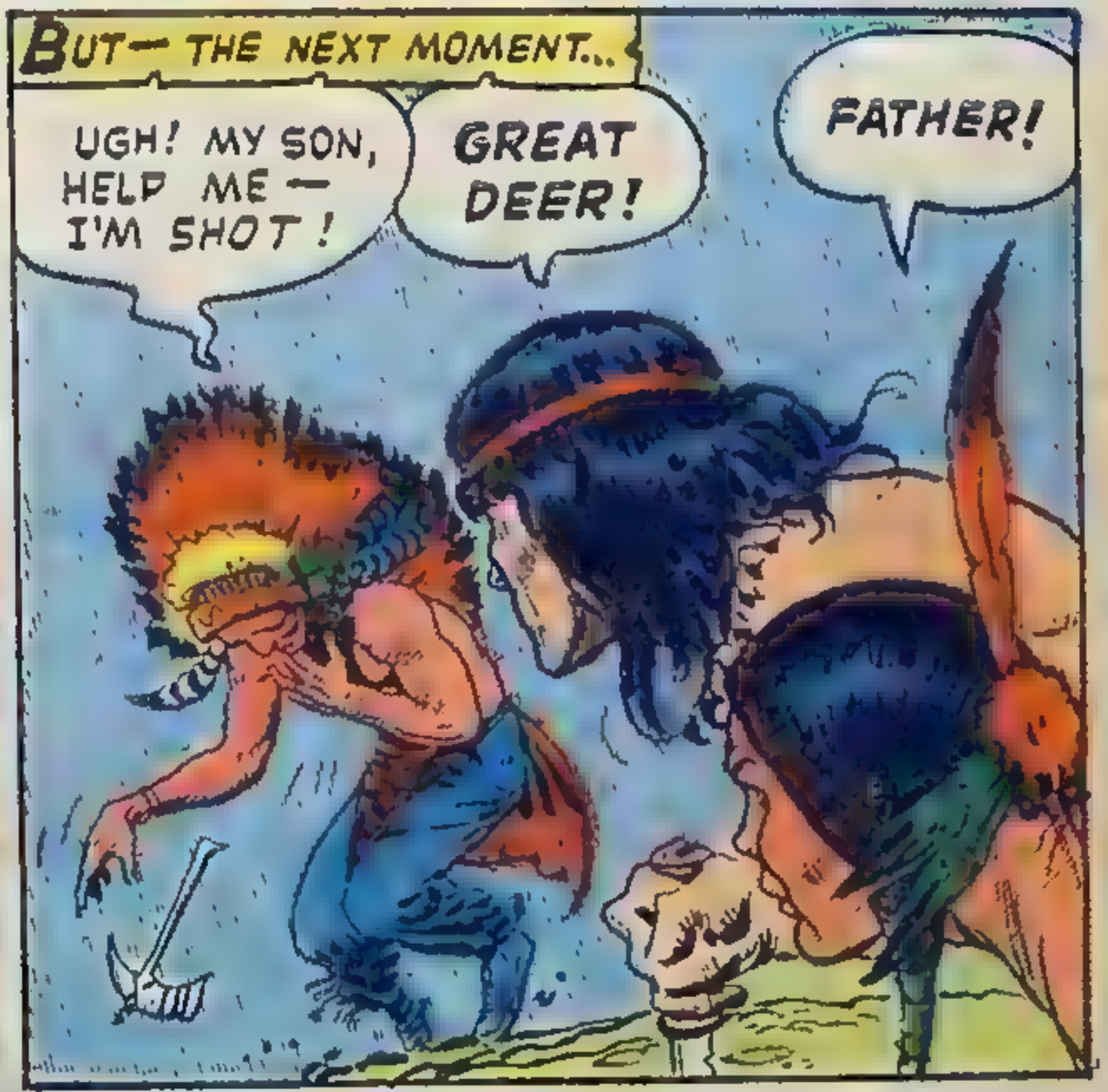
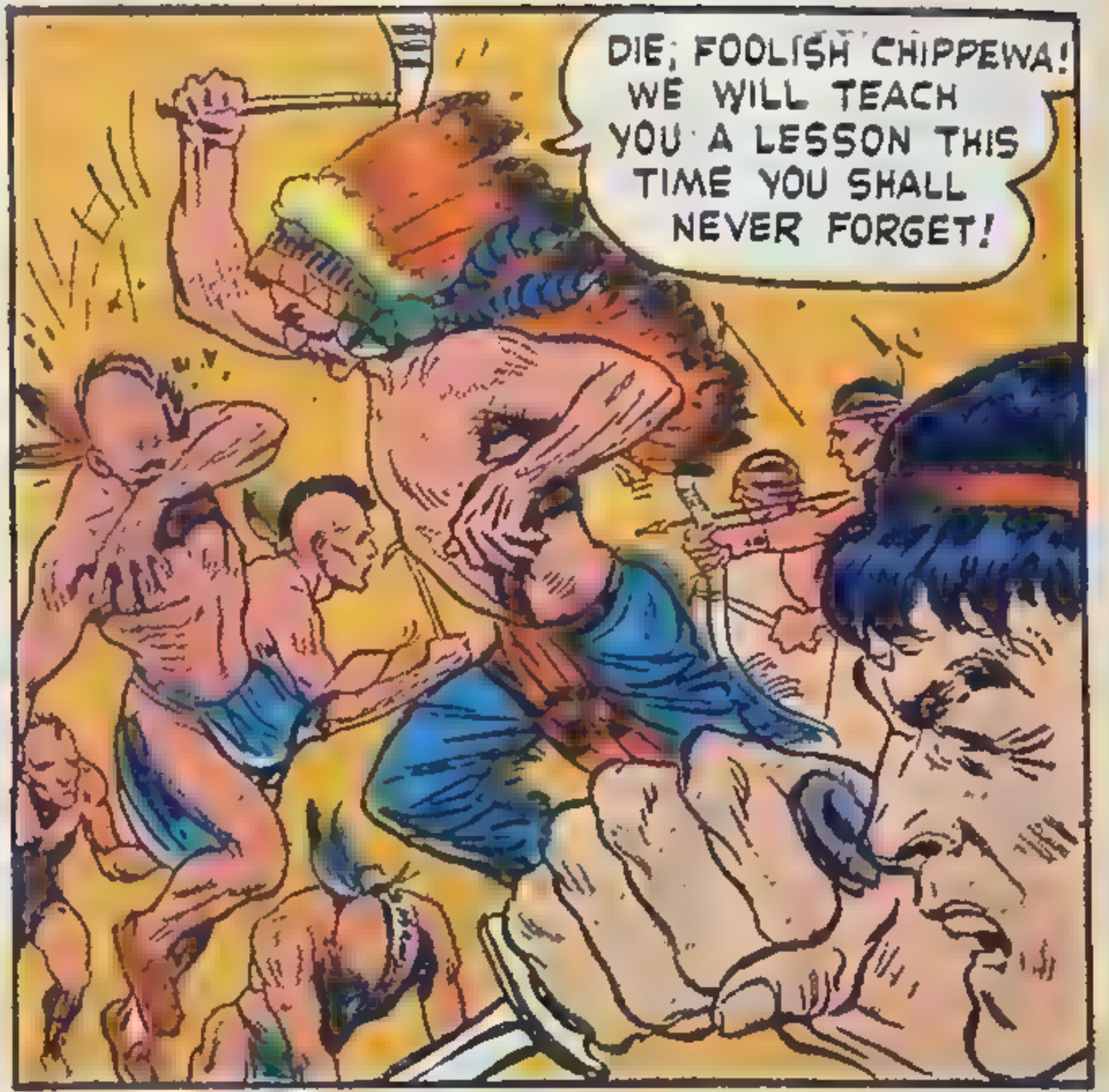
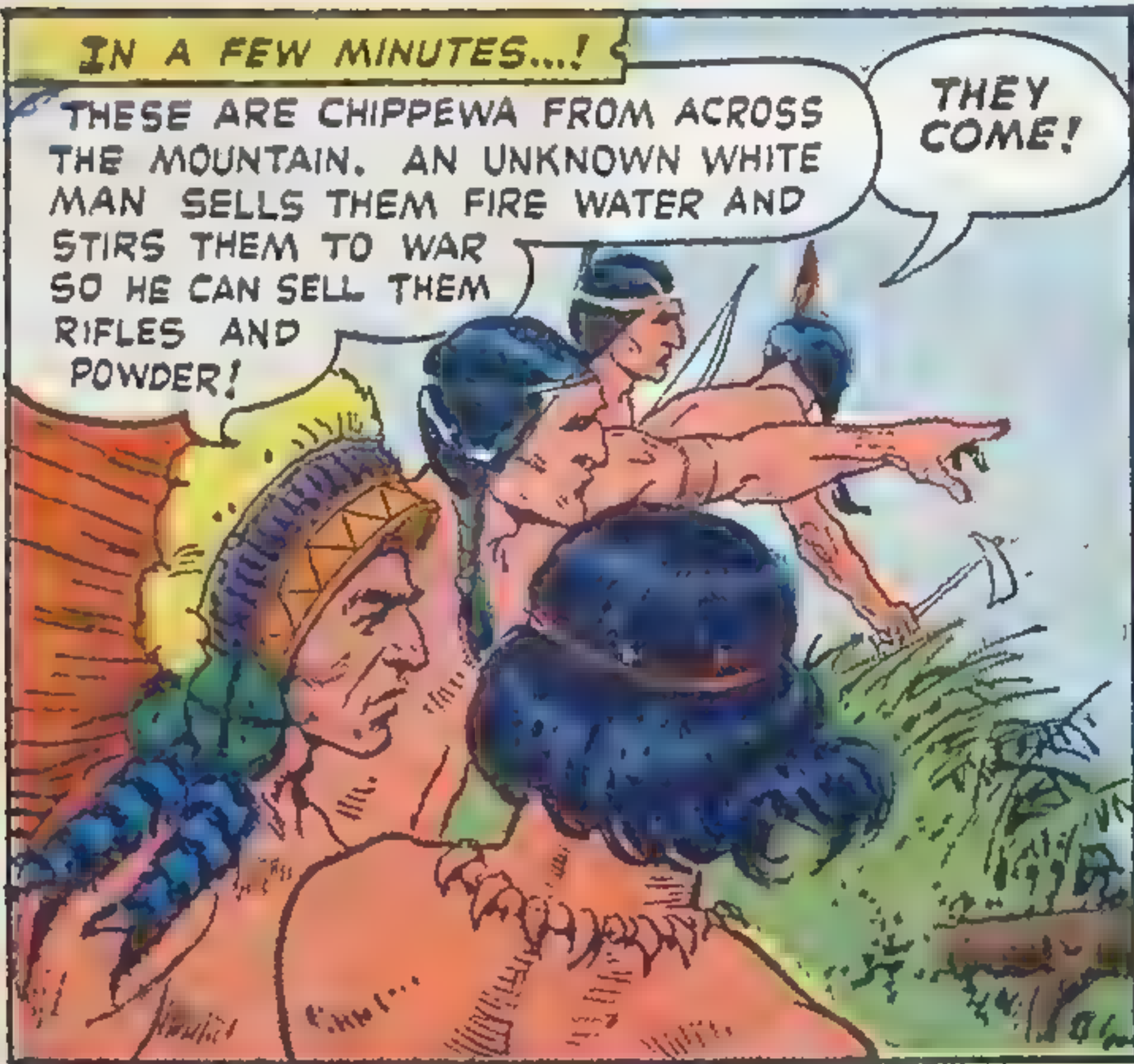
QUICK, DEFEND YOURSELVES! THEY ATTACK! THEY ATTACK! THEY—AHH-H-H-H...!

HE'S DEAD! TO THE DEFENSES, EVERYONE!



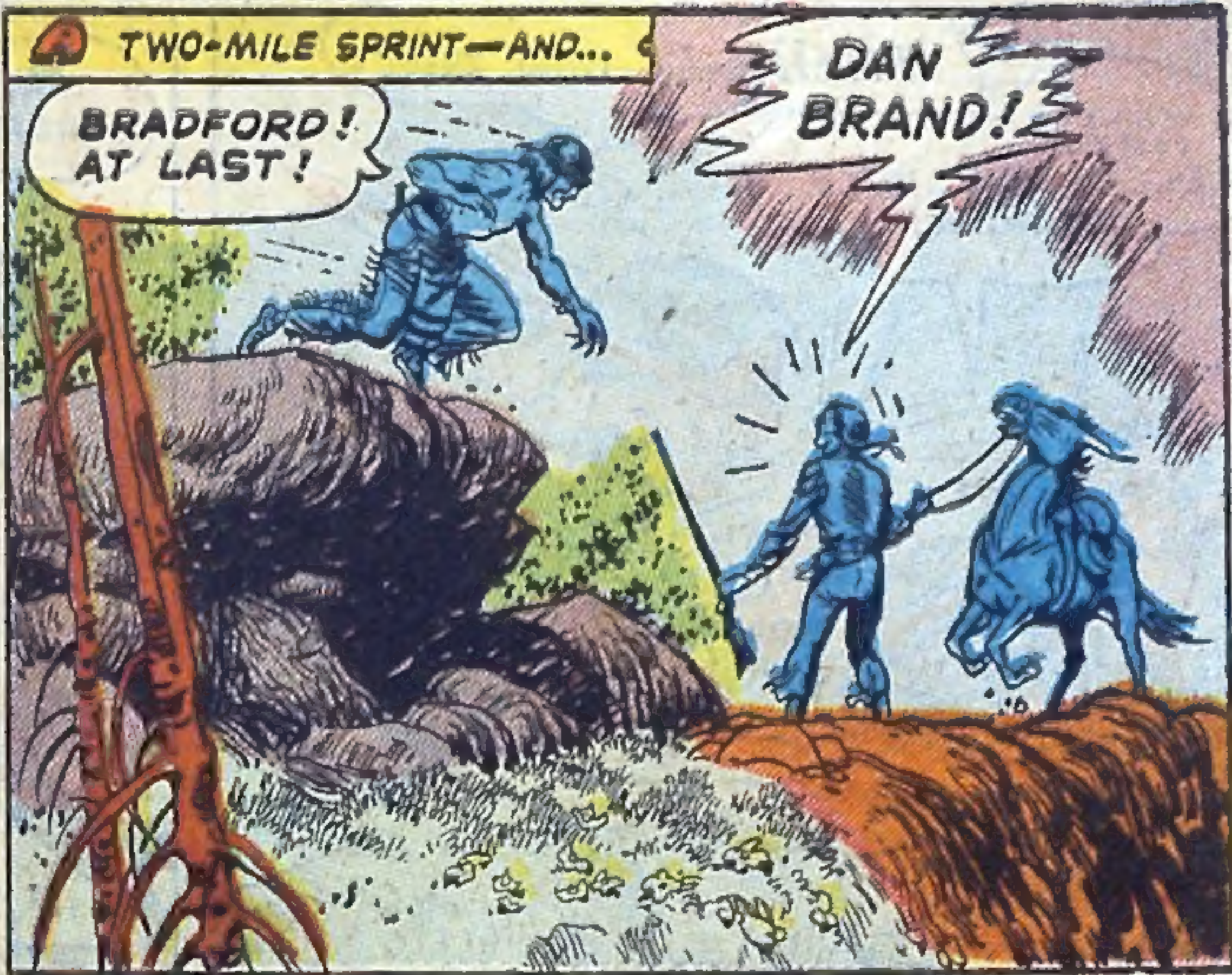
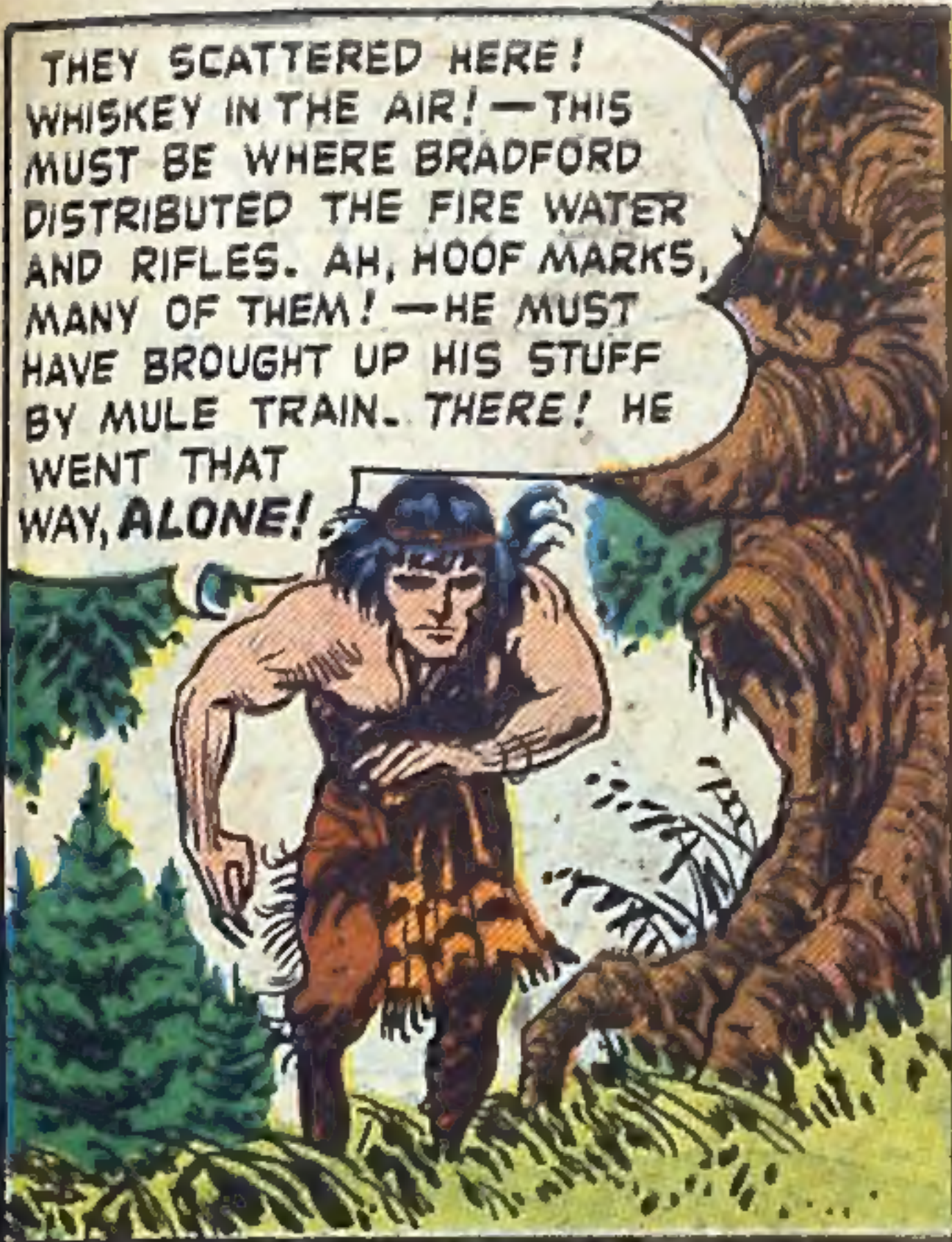


# THE DURANGO KID



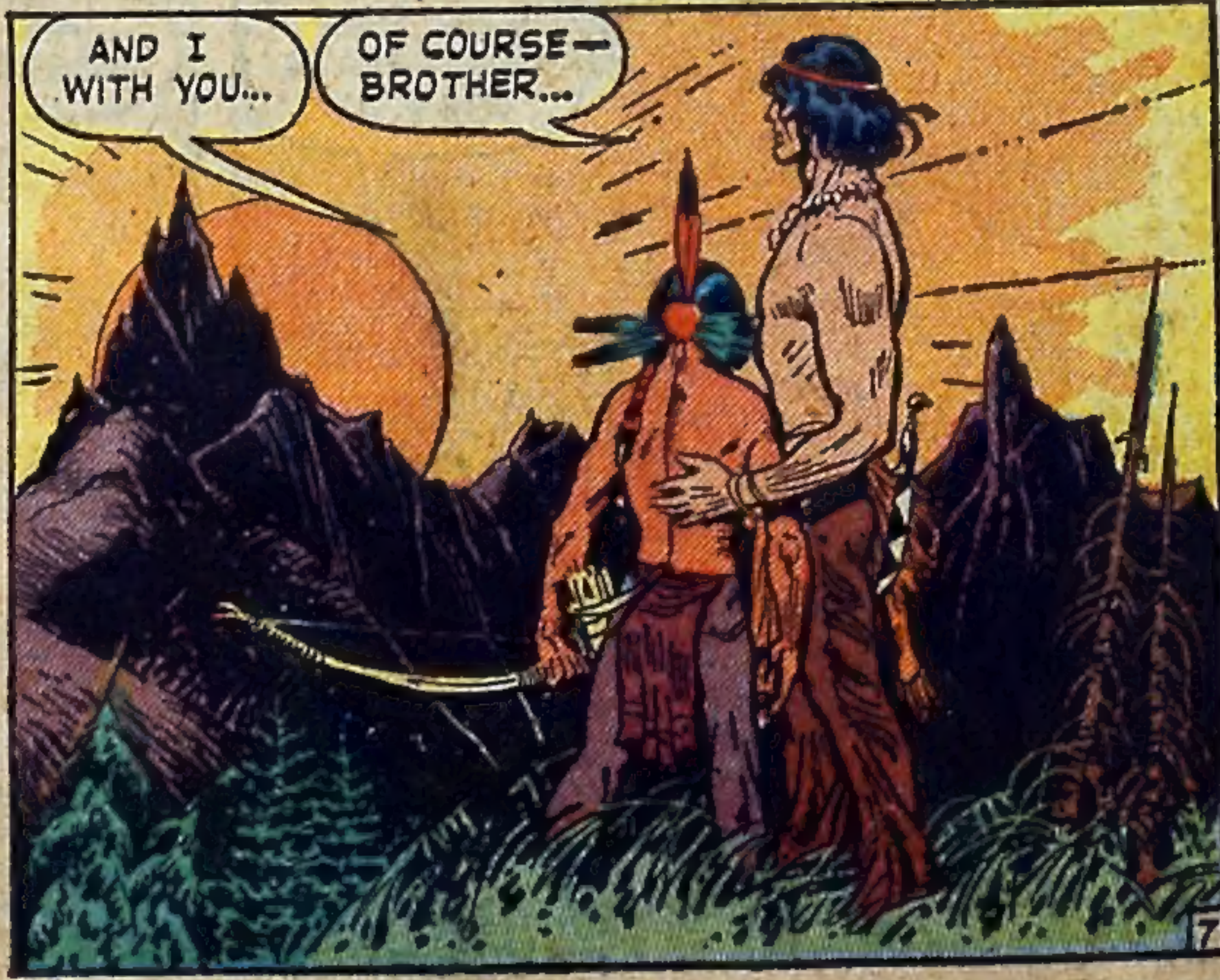


# THE DURANGO KID

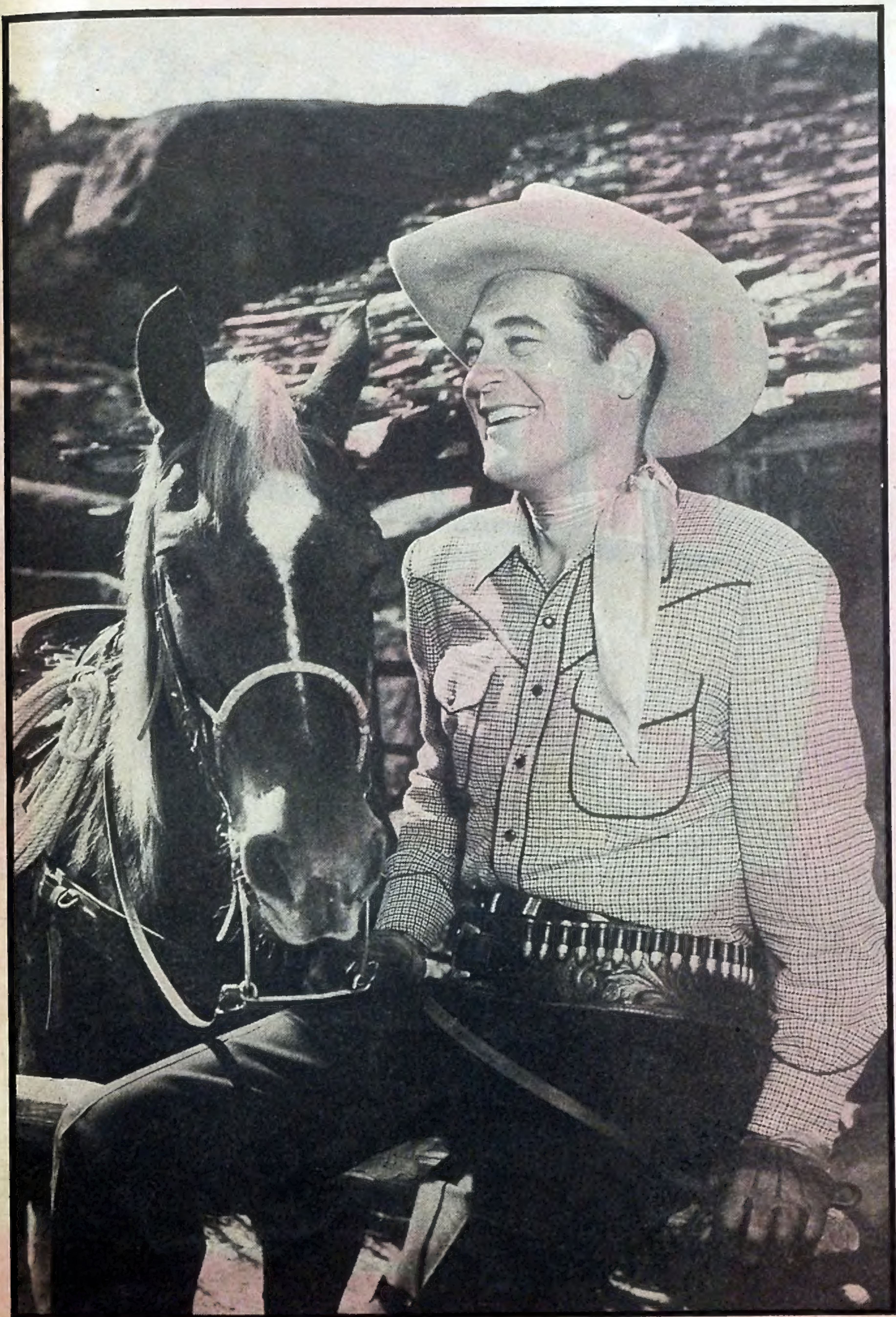




# THE DURANGO KID





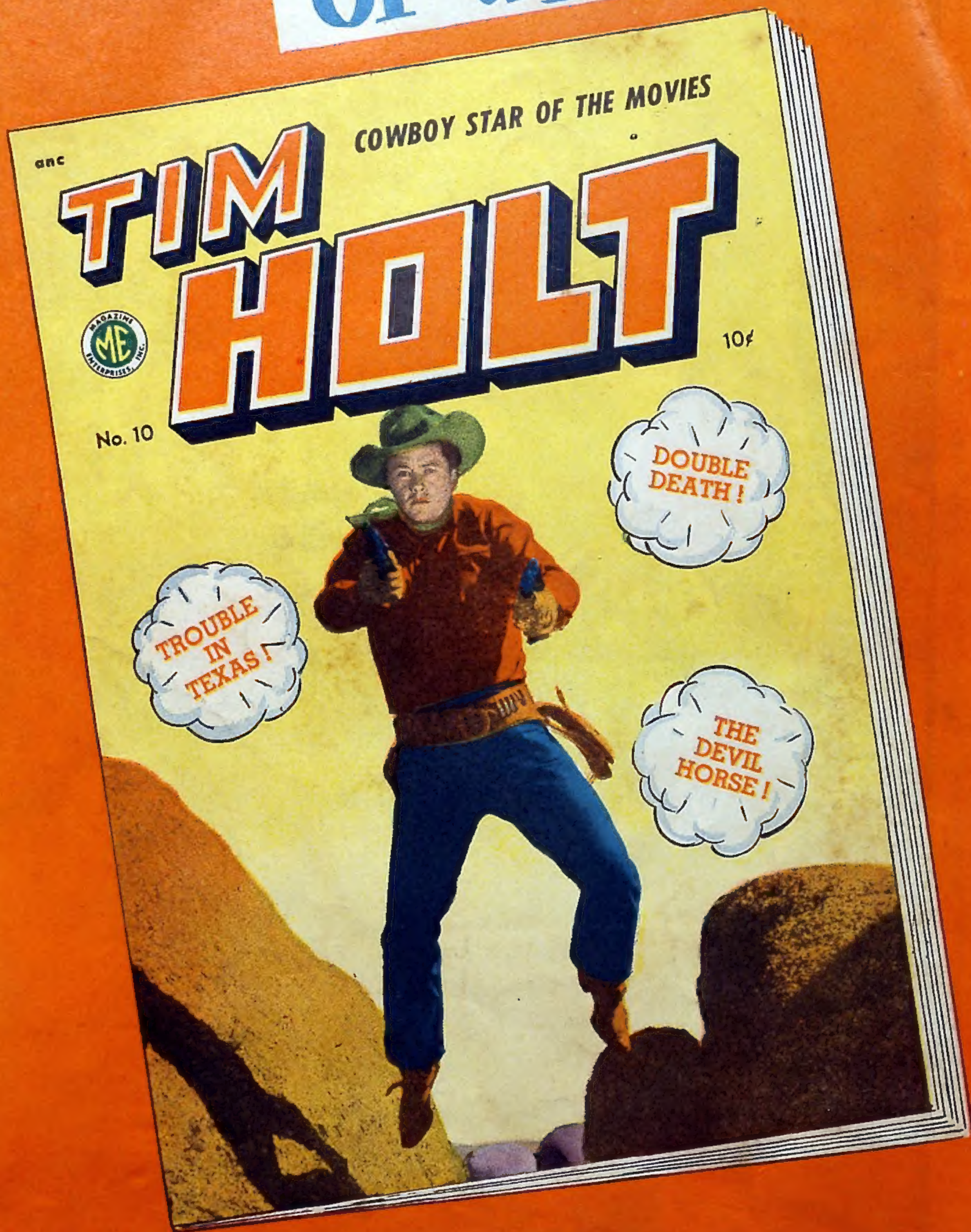


Charles Starrett, star of Columbia's "Durango Kid" western movies.



the best

of the west!



Get it at your favorite newsstand now!